

Hamas vows to avoid Palestinian bloodshed

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas vowed to fight Israel and avoid Palestinian bloodshed a week after a Palestinian police officer was killed in a clash with the group's militants. "Hamas has given orders to its fighters... not to engage in battles with the Palestinian police, never to be the first to shoot Jews when faced with death, and to train their weapons against the Jews," the group said in a statement released overnight Saturday. Police Lieutenant-Colonel Yasser Al Hams, 45, was killed during an attempt to arrest two wanted members of Hamas's armed wing, Izzedin Al Qassam, at Rafah in the Gaza Strip on Sept. 17. Two Hamas activists were also wounded. Hamas said Palestinian police opened fire, while the police said the Islamic hardliners shot their own officer. Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat later met with two leaders of the group, Mahmoud Zahar and Ismail Haniya, in a bid to resolve differences. "As for our relations with our people, it is one of understanding and negotiation," the Hamas statement said. "We will bear injustice and bitterness, even when we are imprisoned by our people, and we will be patient in the face of injuries and martyrdom" inflicted by the Palestinian police.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية الراي

'Sudan offered France Carlos or Abu Nidal'

LONDON (AFP) — France turned down an offer by Sudan to capture Abu Nidal, a Palestinian suspected of masterminding more than 90 international attacks, and instead chose "Carlos the Jackal," the Sunday Times newspaper reports. Sudan told France that Abu Nidal was staying as a guest with Carlos in Khartoum and wanted his help to get a residence permit to stay in Sudan after being tossed out of Libya, the paper said. But after "weeks of intense negotiations" on the choice by "high-ranking French and Sudanese intelligence officers," the French picked Carlos because "he had been implicated in the murder of two French intelligence agents in 1975," the paper said, quoting security sources. Carlos, 44, was spirited out of Khartoum last month and brought to Paris. The deal between France and Sudan emerged in documents which the Sunday Times said it saw after they were "passed to M16" British intelligence. Both governments denied a deal was offered for the capture of Carlos. However, the documents show France gave Sudan, in exchange for Carlos, "satellite photographs that led in the bombing of refugee camps in southern Sudan, causing civilian casualties."

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Egypt to ask Jordan to join regional tourism body

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt will ask Jordan to join a regional association aimed at boosting tourism which it set up with Israel and Turkey last year, Egypt's Middle East News Agency reported Sunday. Egyptian Tourism Minister Mamdouh Al Beltagui will discuss the plan during a visit to Amman beginning Monday, MENA said. He will visit Israel on Wednesday. Mr. Beltagui said Cyprus, Greece, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine could all join the East Mediterranean Tourism Association set up by Egypt, Israel and Turkey in London last November. It was aimed at promoting tourism in the region and improving the tourist infrastructure of the member countries. A tourism ministry official said Saturday Mr. Beltagui would visit Israel Wednesday to discuss the future of tourism in the region "after peace has been established."

Iraq accuses IAEA of bias over Israel

NICOSIA (AFP) — Iraq on Sunday accused the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of double standards for resuming technical aid for Israel's civilian nuclear programme while Baghdad remained under a U.N. embargo. The official daily Al Jumhuriya said Iraq, an IAEA member, had fulfilled United Nations resolutions on the destruction of its weapons and long-term monitoring without any easing of sanctions in return. Yet the IAEA was prepared to "support a country (Israel) which does not respect its rules," the paper said. The Vienna-based IAEA, a U.N. specialised agency, voted Friday to reestablish technical assistance to Israel. Technical aid was suspended in 1981 following the Israeli bombing of Iraq's Tamuz nuclear reactor. "The U.N. encourages countries to support Israel's military nuclear programme while it has sent 26 teams to Iraq, who carried out 634 inspections, especially at sites unconnected with Iraq's nuclear programme," Al Jumhuriya said.

Police remove Jews from Haram Al Sharif

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli police dragged about 20 Jewish protesters away from the Haram Al Sharif complex on Sunday after they attempted to block a major tourist entrance to the site. The demonstrators from the "Temple Mount Faithful" movement sat on a walkway leading up to the site, after Israeli police refused to allow them to enter as a group. They kicked and yelled when they were forcibly removed. The group had successfully petitioned the supreme court last week to be allowed to enter. But police said the protesters could only enter in pairs, said Roland Dayan, the top police officer for Jerusalem's holy places.

Kuwait court to rule on Bush plot

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait's top court will sit in October to consider whether five Iraqis and a Kuwaiti sentenced to death on charges of plotting to kill former U.S. President George Bush should be executed, a senior official said. "The prosecution has filed the case to the cassation court to ratify the death sentences," Attorney General Dhiyar Al Asousi told Reuters. "If (the prosecution) has accepted the rulings issued by the state security court," the five Iraqis and one Kuwaiti were sentenced to death by a state security court in June on charges of plotting to blow Mr. Bush up during a visit to the emirate in April 1993. Six Iraqis and one Kuwaiti were given jail terms ranging from six months to 12 years. Another Kuwaiti was acquitted.

Haiti forces abandon barracks; U.S. Marines kill 10 in shootout

CAP-HAITIEN, Haiti (Agencies) — Haitian soldiers and police abandoned their posts throughout the city as authority collapsed Sunday in Cap-Haitien. Hundreds of civilians ransacked police stations and military barracks, carrying off guns, identity cards, even musical instruments.

The spontaneous uprising came a day after Marines killed 10 armed men outside a police station in the first deadly clash between Haitians and American troops sent to restore the elected government.

In the capital of Port-au-Prince, a source close to the Haitian military said army commander General Cedras was en route to Cap-Haitien on Sunday to investigate the Saturday night firefight.

Looting crowds seized huge caches of weapons Sunday, and some limited gunfire was heard in the morning, but many people appeared to be voluntarily handing the weapons over to the Marines. No casualties were seen.

The main military barracks, main police station and about a dozen smaller posts were abandoned. At the barracks, everything appeared looted, even tubas and trombones from the military band, which some Haitians played in the streets.

The Marines, hearing the sounds of some guns that were apparently being fired in the air, stormed the main military barracks, met no resistance and secured it.

The crowds were mainly calm. However, AP photographer Hans Dery said one

man was seen being dragged away in a headlock by a crowd. When he asked where the man was being taken, an unidentified Haitian said, "they will be judged."

Another man displayed bullets from an M-1 clip in a magazine. He was directed to nearby Marines in an armoured personnel carrier, and then handed his new-found treasure over.

"I give, I give," he said, with a big smile.

"We're trying to calm this down as much as possible," said the marine who received the bullets.

He said Haitians all over this city of 75,000 were turning in rifles, pistols, and semi-automatic weapons including M-16 and some Uzis.

Just hours earlier, Haitian authorities clashed with

American occupation troops sent to pave the way for the return of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

The Americans said the Haitians opened fire first in the Saturday evening gunbattle. A military source in Port-au-Prince said Haitians fired first after being provoked, but said Marines then sprayed the station, killing policemen who were playing dominoes inside.

Major Steve Little, a Marine spokesman, said 10 Haitians were killed. Another Haitian who was seriously wounded was flown to the USS Wasp, a helicopter assault ship, for treatment.

It was not clear whether the 10 dead men were police or "attaches," civilian strongmen backed by the police.

"We regret any loss of life in connection with our mission in Haiti, but it must be clear that U.S. forces are prepared to respond to hostile action against them and will do so," President Clinton said Sunday in New York. "We will continue to work with Haitian military authorities for a peaceful transition."

The firefight was followed by a long siege as Marines tried to persuade two men inside, believed to be policemen wounded in the shooting, to give themselves up.

Colonel Steve Hartley, the battalion commander who arrived on the scene minutes after Saturday's deadly clash, said the platoon from Echo Company had stopped across the street from the police station on its evening patrol. When armed men came out of the station, "words

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A Haitian pro-Aristide supporter shakes hands with a U.S. soldier during a rally between Port-au-Prince harbour and airport (AFP photo)

Rabin, Arafat agree to push ahead with self-rule

EREZ, Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat agreed Sunday to launch negotiations a week on Monday on the next stage of autonomy, including army redeployment and elections.

Mr. Rabin said the two sides would focus on elections to an autonomy council when they meet in Egypt.

"We did not discuss dates (for elections), we discussed dates for negotiations and these will be next Monday in Cairo," Mr. Rabin told a press conference at the Erez checkpoint into the Gaza Strip.

The negotiations would also cover the spread of autonomy beyond Gaza and Jericho across the West Bank, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from built-up Palestinian areas, border crossings and security issues.

Displaying a rapport that was noticeably absent in previous encounters, Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat addressed lingering fears in the other's camp.

Mr. Rabin pledged commitment to the process Palestinians expect to result in a state, and Mr. Arafat promised to redouble efforts to curb anti-Israeli attacks by opponents of peace.

In a gesture that reflected the new warmth in the relationship, Mr. Arafat presented Mr. Rabin with an ancient Torah scroll from Yemen and praised him for the improved spirit of cooperation.

But the old enemies avoided the thorny issues that will emerge in detailed negotiations to begin Oct. 3 in Cairo, agreeing only to reconvene here in a month to examine the progress.

Mr. Rabin said negotiations were necessary to determine the nature of the elected body and to coordinate an orderly pullout of Israeli troops from West

Bank cities.

"We are for elections," Mr. Rabin said. "But we have to know what will be elected, what will be the spheres of the elected body as well as the question of redeployment."

Palestinians want a quasi-parliament with about 100 members, but Israel insists last September's autonomy agreement provides only for a cabinet-like administrative body.

The Israel-PLO agreement envisioned elections in July to extend self-rule beyond the Gaza Strip and Jericho. The deadline was not met, and Mr. Arafat proposed Nov. 1 instead.

But with the Palestinians presently lacking even a population registry, the process left little room to meet such a deadline.

Asked if Nov. 1 was still feasible, Mr. Arafat replied: "I hope so."

Israeli officials have suggested the vote cannot be held before next summer because of the myriad complications of withdrawing Israeli troops from West Bank towns. The accord requires an Israeli pullout before balloting.

A hasty withdrawal could spark increased friction between the West Bank's nearly one million Arabs and 120,000 Jewish settlers.

Mr. Rabin also faces strong domestic opposition to extending Palestinian control to the West Bank.

Topping Israel's summit agenda was concern over bloodshed that has persisted despite the peace accord. Mr. Rabin has warned the PLO to rein in the hardliners or he would delay extending autonomy.

Underlining the difficulties, the summit came shortly after a Jewish settler in Gaza, 17-year-old Yacov Fischer, was stabbed and wounded. The assailant carried a leaflet from the Islamic

Hamas movement although the group denied responsibility.

Mr. Arafat issued an unusually stern condemnation of the attack.

"We are completely against all kinds of terrorism," he said. "We are doing our best to prevent such attacks. We have promised to increase all our capabilities... to prevent such attacks. It is a challenge against the whole peace process."

Sunday's summit, the fifth between Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat since their historic handshake on the White House lawn a year ago, was unusually cordial.

"There was a positive and even friendly atmosphere," said Israeli Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, who was present at the meeting.

"Both sides are adjusting to the realisation they are in the same boat."

"There are here and there differences but I believe that the spirit and mood was cooperation with the purpose to overcome these obstacles of misunderstanding," Mr. Rabin said.

"Within a month we will meet again here to try to see where we stand," Mr. Rabin added.

Mr. Arafat also said their talks Sunday were "positive."

"We are committed completely... we hope that we will carry on our coordination and cooperation."

The negotiations remain in the framework of the declaration of principles for Palestinian self-government, which called for redeployment of Israeli troops from built-up areas by the eve of elections, originally due on July 13.

Israel handed over responsibility for education on the West Bank in August, but has demanded that the Palestinians have a budget to cover operating costs before devolving power over taxation, tourism, social welfare and health.

Mixed results for Kohl in Bavaria

MUNICH (Agencies) — The ruling Christian Social Union (CSU), sister party to Chancellor Helmut Kohl's Christian Democrats, retained its absolute majority in win Bavaria's state election on Sunday, exit polls showed.

The poll for ARD television gave the conservative party 54 per cent, just down from its 1990 result of 54.9 per cent.

But Mr. Kohl's other ally in his coalition, the Free Democrats, crashed out of the Bavarian assembly with only three per cent, under the five per cent minimum, after 5.2 per cent in 1990.

The opposition Social Democrats (SPD) rose to 30 per cent from 26 per cent in 1990 while the Greens teetered on the edge with five per cent after 6.4 per cent in 1990.

The far-right Republicans also failed to enter parliament, winning only three per cent after 4.9 per cent in 1990, the exit poll said.

The CSU, which has ruled Bavaria for the last 37 years, was expected easily to beat the Social Democrats on a high turn-out increasing the score of both main parties compared with the last election for the Munich assembly, in 1990.

Pre-election surveys gave the CSU well over 50 per cent.

Slightly battered by corruption scandals in recent years, the CSU has lately bounced back under the leadership of state Premier Edmund Stoiber, while the SPD has a flamboyant woman leader in Bavaria, Renate Schmidt.

Television stations said the Free Democrats' elimination from the assembly in Munich confirmed a national decline of the liberal party with possibly far-reaching implications for the federal government in Bonn.



His Majesty King Hussein, accompanied by international force in Haiti; (below) the King Public Security Department chief General meets with the departing policemen (photos by Abdul Rahman Adwan, on Sunday inspects a Yousef Al 'Allan) police unit before its departure to join the

Police unit leaves for Haiti

AMMAN (J.T.) — A team of 150 Jordanian policemen, including 30 officers, left Amman on Sunday to join a U.S.-led United Nations peacekeeping force in Haiti.

His Majesty King Hussein inspected the forces, who were dressed in full military gear, before they set off for Port-au-Prince.

"I am proud of you and have full confidence that you will carry out your peacekeeping duties in the best manner," King Hussein told the unit.

King Hussein, supreme commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, expressed confidence that the Jordanian troops will live up to the hopes and confidence placed in them. The King wished them every success and reiterated his pride and that of every Jordanian in them.

King Hussein said Jordan ranked fifth in worldwide contribution of army and police personnel to U.N. peacekeeping operations. They serve in troubled areas from Bosnia and Croatia to Mozambique.

"You will help maintain peace and security, and with the experience you de-

veloped, you will help train (local police) cadres to enable them to continue their role in the future," the King told the men, clad in dark blue uniforms and anti-riot helmets.

U.S. ambassador Wesley Egan and senior Jordanian officials watched under a blazing sun as King Hussein inspected the 50 officers and 120 privates. Most of the men, who shouted "Long live the King," speak either English or French.

Earlier this month, U.S.

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هناك من الأصل

Amid signs of reconciliation, Algeria puts bounty on militants

ALGIERS (AP) — Government and Muslim fundamentalist officials have offered conciliatory words to restart talks on ending a bloody insurgency. But authorities have also toughened their stand against militant leaders by offering a bounty for their capture.

The president's spokesman was on television Friday, referring to the still-banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and calling for elections. A government newspaper Saturday reported daily meetings by front leaders released from prison, and a front spokesman soberly called for a "solution to the crisis."

The gestures came after a fourth round of talks between the military-backed government and five legal opposition parties ended Tuesday without a final communiqué or another meeting date.

Hopes of "conciliation rose after President Zerrouk shifted Ahassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, the FIS' president and vice president, from prison to house arrest Sept. 13.

An estimated 10,000 people have died since the government cancelled January 1992 elections in which voters, fed up with corruption and unemployment, were expected to hand the FIS a victory.

Officials of the front say Mr. Madani and Mr. Belhadj, still held in a secret location, consider themselves still jailed and would not negotiate.

The talks "will continue,"

said presidential spokesman M'houb M'houbi. Speaking on national government TV, he said the most important issue was "new elections, so that the decision is once again made by the people."

Mr. M'houbi, whose government has in the past referred to the fundamentalist opposition as "terrorists," said the necessary conditions existed "for the FIS to clearly express its position and contribute to appeasing the situation."

The presidency aims to "intensity bilateral consultations before setting a date for a new multiparty meeting."

Meanwhile, the government daily El Wakeel reported Saturday that Mr. Madani and Mr. Belhadj were receiving visitors every Wednesday.

The paper quoted Ahmad Kerfah, president of the Movement of the Islamic Message, as saying the two leaders appeared "determined to find solutions to the problems of the country" when he met with them.

The paper quoted Mr. Kerfah as saying the FIS leaders still demanded "rehabilitation of the FIS, total liberty of movement for the two leaders and possibility for the party's consultative council to meet."

FIS spokesman Rabah Kebir said in an interview that the party is "convinced of the need to work out a solution to the crisis" in Algeria.

Quoted in Saturday's edition of the Algerian daily Al Khabar, Mr. Kebir also

spoke of the need to talk with armed groups. But he added: "The ideas that concern us are fought for by ideas and not guns."

The government kept up its battle with militants, however, reporting killing 30 of them from Monday to Thursday.

Authorities announced a reward of three million dinars (\$85,000) for the capture of Said Makhloufi, one of the two chiefs of the Islamic Salvation Army, the armed wing of the FIS, said an official source speaking on condition of anonymity Saturday.

The capture of salvation army's number two, Abdel Kader Chebouch, had a bounty of two million dinars (\$55,000), the source said. The government was offering 2.5 million dinars (\$70,000) for the capture of Cherif Gouami, head of the Armed Islamic Group, or his assistant, Kamel Zitouni.

The Armed Islamic Group has waged a bloody campaign that has included killing foreigners has been criticised by the FIS.

Fifty-nine foreigners have been killed since September last year in an attempt to destabilise a government dependent on foreign capital and know-how.

In another development, the government announced subsidies next year of 148 billion dinars (\$4 billion) for overstaffed state-owned companies. Between 1991 and 1994, 400 billion dinars (\$11 billion) were allocated for that purpose.



GIFT TO RABIN: Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat presents Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin with an ancient scroll of the Jewish Torah from Yemen on Sunday during their meeting at Erez checkpoint (see page one) (AFP photo)

1,220 suspects charged over 50 attacks — Cairo paper

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian authorities have charged a total 1,220 suspected Islamic militants in connection with 50 attacks committed by the fundamentalist Al Gamaa al Islamiya group, the Al Gummhuriya daily reported Sunday.

The arrests were made following the shooting by police here five months' ago of the head of the organisation's military wing, Talaat Yassin Hammam, and the discovery of intelligence concerning its membership.

Also found in 45 separate caches were 50 explosive devices, a quantity of automatic weapons and 600,000 Egyptian pounds (\$180,000), the newspaper said.

In another report, the governmental daily Al Ahram said Sunday that a suspected leader of the Islamic militant Al Jihad group was arrested at the Egyptian-Libyan border.

Hisham Abaza, "one of the most dangerous fundamentalist leaders," was arrested at the border post of Salum as he tried to return to Egypt from Libya, the newspaper said.

Mr. Abaza, who received military training in Afghanistan, was one of the leaders of Al Jihad's military wing in the Shariya region in northern Egypt, the paper said.

He set up a "terrorist group" in the region after meeting Algerian Islamic militants, Al Ahram said without giving a date for his visit to Algeria.

Mr. Abaza was also in contact with Al Jihad's military leader Ayman Al Zawahiri, sentenced to death in his absence by an Egyptian court and currently sheltering in Switzerland, according to the report.

Meanwhile, police said another Al Jihad militant serving a five-year prison sentence died Saturday from a liver complaint, police said here.

Mohammad Abdul Salam Darwish, 30, died at the Kasr Al Eini hospital where he had been taken for treatment, they said.

He was sentenced by a Cairo military court in 1993 in one of four trials of people in the military wing of the fundamentalist Al Jihad group, responsible notably for the 1981 assassination of President Anwar Sadat.

NEWS IN BRIEF

32 die, 70 injured in Algerian floods

ALGIERS (AFP) — At least 32 people have died and 70 have been injured with dozens of others reported missing in floods and torrential rain, according to the latest official count Sunday. Officials in the eastern region of Bordj Bou Arreridj said 13 had died and 49 were injured, while 260 families had lost their homes. In the western region of Tizi Ouzou 10 people were killed and 13 families were left homeless. In addition three were killed in Bouira, two in M'sila, two in Medea, one in Naama and one in Tissemsilt. In Naama 24 people were hurt when a bus overturned. Hundreds of homes, shops and roads have been damaged by the flood waters which are two meters high in Bordj Bou Arreridj. Houses and cars have been almost entirely covered by mud, according to television pictures.

Golan hunger-striker hospitalised

GAMLA, Occupied Golan Heights (AFP) — One of a dozen hunger-striking protesters at Israel's offer to return part of the Golan Heights to Syria was taken to hospital on Sunday. Sammy Bar Lev, mayor of Katzrin, the biggest Israeli settlement on the plateau, fainted after two weeks on what protesters have billed as a hunger strike. He was taken to Tiberias hospital on the other side of the Sea of Galilee in Israel but announced that he would be back after treatment. Eleven colleagues continued their fast, although in fact the group are taking water and vegetable soup. The Golan settlers say about 100,000 Israelis have been to the spectacular cliff-top site at Gamla to show their support and several thousand people are expected to stage a token one-day fast on Wednesday. The strike was launched after Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin announced he had offered Syria a "marginal" withdrawal from the Golan over three years in return for peace.

Kazakh president visits S. Arabia

JEDDAH (AFP) — Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev arrived in Jeddah on the Red Sea Sunday for a three-day visit aimed at boosting economic cooperation with Saudi Arabia. Saudi officials said Mr. Nazarbayev was due to discuss trade and regional and international issues with King Fahd. He was accompanied by a high-level Kazakh government delegation. A meeting with Hamed Al Ghabid, head of the Jeddah-based Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), was also planned, the officials said.

Four Somalis killed in fighting

MOGADISHU (R) — Faction fighting in Somalia at the weekend killed four people and wounded seven, a United Nations spokesman in Mogadishu said on Sunday. Those killed in the clash in Bossaso on Saturday included the commissioner of the northeastern Gardheer district, said Mohammad Haji, a bodyguard of General Mohammad Abshir of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF). U.N. officials said two rival wings of the SSDF were vying for control of Bossaso, the main port of northeast Somalia, and the clash appeared to be linked to the struggle between them. Two rival warlords each claim to lead the SSDF.

UAE has largest Japanese community in Mideast

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has become home to the largest Japanese community in the Middle East, as hundreds of Japanese have streamed in to do business in the oil-rich Gulf state, officials said on Sunday. Around 1,100 Japanese now work in the UAE while 70 Japanese companies have opened branches here, Japanese ambassador to the UAE Shun Watanabe told reporters. "Due to the developed economic ties between the two countries, the number of Japanese working in the UAE has largely increased and they now form the biggest Japanese community in the Middle East," he said. Japan is the top importer of UAE oil, receiving around 25 per cent of its total oil imports from the UAE. It also has more than \$1.5 billion in oil and industrial investment as well as distribution units in Dubai free zone.

Al Islah supports multi-party system

SANAA (AFP) — The Muslim fundamentalist party Al Islah on Saturday vowed to support the multi-party system in Yemen, at the end of its first general congress which also called for democracy along Islamic lines.

In a statement here the party announced its commitment to a multi-party system to "promote political stability" in Yemen after its May-July civil war.

It also called for "democracy based on the Shura" or Islamic consultation, and filled its newly-elected consultative council and political bureau with Muslim Brotherhood leaders.

Some 10 political parties are active in Yemen where Al Islah, President Ali Abdullah Saleh's General People's Congress (GPC) and the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) make up the ruling coalition.

Al Islah, strengthened by the alliance with the GPC, emerged from the civil war aiming to increase its influence and capitalise on the defeat of the socialists, its arch-rivals.

Northern troops captured Aden on July 2 after two months of war, ending a bid by followers of former Vice-President and YSP leader Ali Salem Al Beidh to form a breakaway state in the south.

While stressing "the development of brotherly relations between Al Islah and the GPC," Al Islah delegates called on the government to "wipe out the after-effects of the totalitarian regime and socialist culture" of the YSP, which ruled former South Yemen before it merged with the North in 1990.

Al Islah has also vowed to extend its influence south of the country, where plans to reactivate Islamic institutions put on hold by the YSP, the congress statement said.

However, southerners almost completely absent from Al Islah's newly-elected consultative council and political bureau, which is dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood which formed the party together with powerful northern tribes and Yemen's leading conservative traders in 1990.

Party leader Sheikh Abdullah Al Ahmar was given a new four-year mandate by the congress, which opened on Tuesday.

The Brotherhood's influential leader Abdullah Zaidani, also member of the Yemen's ruling presidential council, was named head of Al Islah's 100-member consultative council.

Several other Muslim Brotherhood officials were elected on to the party's 15-member political bureau by the consultative council.

The new Al Islah leadership told reporters it was setting up an alliance with the GPC. "There is no alternative to this alliance for the near future," said Sheikh Abdul Wahab Al Ahmar, party secretary-general.

He added: "Without interfering in internal affairs, the YSP must adopt a clear and frank position" towards its former leaders.

Most YSP leaders fled into exile at the end of the war and the party has elected a new leadership while refusing to evict the exiles.

S. Arabia rejects reports of arrests, unrest

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia said opposition reports of arrests and disorder in the kingdom were "lies and misleading information."

The official Saudi Press Agency quoted Prince Ahmad Ben Abdul Aziz, deputy interior minister, as saying on Saturday when asked about the reports: "Saudi citizens are familiar with what is going on and this is enough as far as we are concerned."

"As for the outside world there are many lies and misleading information by one quarter or other who have their own goals... and those have become boring and incredible," he said.

"This is an open country, its citizens know what is going on. The reality is known by those who are... rational and genuine," he said. "This country will remain blessed as long as its citizens follow the Holy Book and their wise leadership which is acting in accordance with public interest."

Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz said on Wednesday there was "complete security" in the kingdom.

Diplomats in the kingdom said recent reports of disturbances and mass arrests in Saudi Arabia were exaggerated and there was no danger to foreigners, although the British and U.S. embassies advised their nationals to be cautious.

U.N. shows acceptance of Israel — Yaacobi

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Presidents, princes, and foreign ministers are heading for the United Nations and the Israeli ambassador is brimming with excitement.

For Gad Yaacobi, the three-weeks of speeches and meetings that open the General Assembly will also showcase his country's increasing acceptance by the international community and bring him closer to his dream of an Israeli at peace with its neighbours and embraced by the world.

"I took part in the struggle for peace... and for me it is a real celebration," Mr. Yaacobi said. As he spoke he thumbled through a list of the 25 foreign ministers and heads of state that Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres plans to meet while in New York.

Just a few years ago, Israel was shunned at the United Nations and resolutions were routinely passed lashing out at the country's policies. Arab delegates routinely walked out when Israel's representative rose to speak.

But since opening peace talks with its Arab neighbours and signing a peace accord with the Palestinians last September, Israel has been increasingly welcomed at the United Nations.

"I am taking part in the realisation of my own dreams," Mr. Yaacobi said. "The next week will be another step in normalising Israel's relationship with the international community."

When Mr. Peres addresses the General Assembly on Thursday "One or two members will leave the hall," Mr. Yaacobi said. "Five or six years ago 20 to 30 delegates would have left."

A reception Mr. Yaacobi is hosting in honour of Mr.

Peres is expected to draw representatives from more than 100 countries, including officials from countries with which Israel does not yet have relations.

"The accessibility is greater, the tension has decreased a lot," Mr. Yaacobi said, reflecting on his two years in New York.

Mr. Yaacobi is also finding common ground with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), once one of Israel's staunchest foes. Mr. Yaacobi is working with the PLO's observer and the Egyptian ambassador on a resolution endorsing recent moves towards peace.

The three diplomats have agreed to coordinate efforts to block resolutions critical of the peace accords.

But Mr. Yaacobi only smiles when asked about his personal relationship with PLO observer Nasser Al Kidwa. When pressed he merely describes their meetings as "very businesslike" although he says his wife Nella sometimes calls Mr. Kidwa's wife Christine to chat.

Israel, which once routinely ignored U.N. resolution and regarded the world body with hostility, is also increasing its commitment to the United Nations.

Israel is sending 30 volunteers to the U.N. force that will be stationed in Haiti and three Israelis were recently elected to U.N. posts.

"Israel now understands the importance of the international community in mobilising goodwill and support for Middle East development," Mr. Yaacobi said.

But some critics have questioned whether a confident Israel at relative peace will begin to lose support with its closest ally — the American Jewish community.

U.S. pilot denies dereliction in Iraq downing incident

BERLIN (AP) — The air force pilot charged with negligent homicide in the downing of two U.S. helicopters over northern Iraq spoke out Saturday, insisting he is innocent and was not derelict on that fateful April day.

Lieutenant-Colonel Randy W. May said that while "terribly sorry" for the "unthinkable heartache" felt by the loved ones of the 26 people killed in the accidental shoot-down, he rejects any criminal culpability.

"My decision to fire was the last action in a long chain of events involving a number of people and agencies. Numerous errors occurred in that chain of events. The decision to fire was based on human error," Col. May said.

Col. May, a squadron commander, suggested in a statement released by his lead defence counsel — his first response to the charges announced Sept. 8 — that the main fault lay outside his cockpit.

"The mission we flew was not conducted haphazardly, but was performed in a disciplined manner as planned and briefed," said Col. May. "There were mistakes made at many different levels," Col. May's attorney, Air Force Captain Earl Martin, said in a telephone interview. The Pentagon has not denied this, but only Col. May has been charged with negligent homicide.

Col. May was flying with a lower-ranking F-15 pilot who visually misidentified the two U.S. Black Hawk choppers as Iraqi Hinds violating the no-fly zone set up to protect Kurds from Iraqi air attack, the Pentagon says.

Officers on an AWACS

radar plane had transmitted message to the jet fighter that the two pilots interpreted as confirmation that helicopters were Iraqi, the lead pilot made a final effort to determine electronically whether the helicopters were friendly. Receiving no reply, he fired the radar-guided missile that downed the Black Hawk.

Col. May then fired the missile that destroyed the second U.S. chopper.

Everybody aboard the two helicopters was killed — 11 Americans and 11 foreigners including military officers from Britain, France and Turkey.

A Pentagon study released in July said controllers aboard the AWACS plane knew there were two U.S. helicopters in the area but failed to notify the F-15 pilot of this when the fighter reported seeing two choppers.

Five officers aboard the AWACS plane were charged with dereliction of duty in the April 14 incident Col. May's lead pilot was neither named nor charged.

Col. May, who has been in the military nearly 20 years and is sequestered with his wife and two children at his home base in Spangdahlem, Germany, and faces the military equivalent of a grand jury hearing on Nov. 7.

Capt. Martin said his wife was confident he would be cleared of the charges but did not want to speak to the media — at least until the hearing, which he said the military has decided to open to the public. It is to be held at Sembach air base in Germany, headquarters of the 17th Air Force, said Col. Martin.

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:00 Pif Et Hercule
17:10 Bestunoir
17:30 Musique Sans Frontiers
18:30 News in French
18:45 The Weekly Sport Magazine
19:00 News in Hebrew
19:30 Black Beauty
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Home Free
21:10 A Galactic Odyssey
22:00 News in English
22:20 Matrix

PRAYER TIMES
06:04 Fajr
05:21 Sunrise (Sana'a) Doha
11:27 Dhuhr
14:54 Asr
17:54 Maghrib
18:30 Isha

CHURCHES
St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 625541.

Anglican Church Tel. 630551, Tel. 622543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 771331.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian Apostolic Church Tel. 625256.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624338.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195.
The Lutheran Church Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.

WEATHER
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Temperatures are expected to drop with clouds appearing at low altitudes and a chance of showers. Winds will be light and variable becoming northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 18 / 31
Aqaba 25 / 37
Deserts 16 / 34
Jordan Valley 23 / 36

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 33, Aqaba 38 Humidity

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

readings: Amman 20 per cent, Aqaba 33 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS
NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Nasser Ibrahim 682935
Dr. Youssef Rashid 896301
Dr. Fayed Dabbas 791151
Dr. Mustafa Harzallah 826024
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 670335
Al Azma pharmacy 623672
Nabouk pharmacy 644945
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yaacobi pharmacy 637660
Sanaei pharmacy 637660
Nabouk pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Akram Al Momani 248795
Alquds pharmacy (-)

ZARQA:
Dr. Tareq Hijwaji 985445
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Emergency 630341
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 896390
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 623101
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khaldi Maternity, J. Ann. 642816
Al-Khaldi Maternity, J. Ann. 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Mulhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Sanaei 641714
Sanaei Hospital 699131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musabir Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 66612737
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Islamic, Al-Muhajreen 7771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashraf 7511126
Army, Marja 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)987332
Al-Humra Modern Hospital (09)99990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)735555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)72275
Al-Nadwa Hospital (02)747100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)57200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:15 Sanaa (RJ)
08:00 Damascus (RJ)
08:30 Jeddah (RJ)
09:00 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:00 Riyadh (RJ)
10:00 Beirut (RJ)
10:00 New Delhi (RJ)
10:30 Cairo (RJ)
17:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
18:00 Bangkok (RJ)
18:30 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
23:45 Moscow (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

10:00 Khartoum (SD)
10:30 Moscow, Abu Dhabi (GF)
16:00 Sanaa (RJ)
17:00 Rome (AZ)
19:20 Cairo (EK)
20:00 Dubai (EM)
20:45 Beirut (Jed) (ME)
09:30 Amsterdam (KL)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

08:45 Beirut (RJ)
12:00 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
12:15 London (RJ)
12:25 Frankfurt (RJ)
12:45 Cairo (RJ)
13:25 Beirut, Doha (RJ)
13:45 Moscow (RJ)
19:00 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
20:00 Dhahran (RJ)
20:45 Damascus (RJ)
21:00 Al-Ahli, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
21:30 Dubai, Moscow (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

08:00 Istanbul (TK)
08:15 Beirut (ME)
11:00 Khartoum (SD)
13:30 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi, Muscat (GF)
15:00 Sanaa (RJ)
20:15 Cairo (MS)
22:30 Dubai (EK)
01:30 Amsterdam (KL)

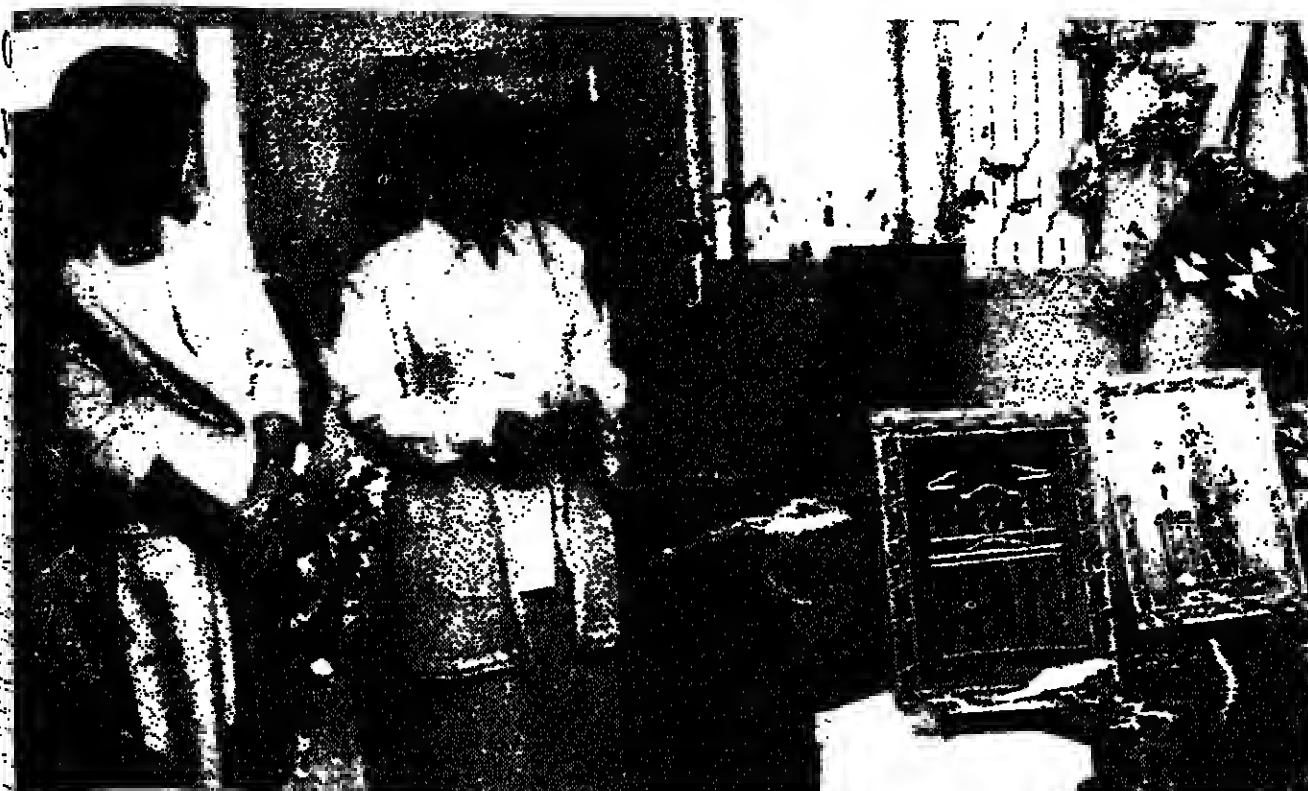
HIAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Monday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price list for the week ending 26/9/94

Apple 2000
Banana (Mekasani) 2000
Carrot 2000
Cauliflower 2000
Cucumbers (large) 2000
Cucumbers (small) 2000
Eggplant 2000
Grape 2000
Grapes (Hilwani) 2000
Guava 2000
Lemon 2000
Marrow (large) 2000
Marrow (small) 2000
Mushroom 2000
Onion (dry) 2000
Onion (green) 2000
Pepper (hot) 2000
Pepper (sweet) 2000
Potato 2000
Pumpkin 2000
Spinach 2000
Tomato 2000
String beans 2000
Watermelon 2000



Her Majesty Queen Noor on Sunday visits an Irbid project of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (Photo byystal)

Queen visits GFJW income-generating project

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor, the jorany president of the General Federation of Jordanian Women (GFJW), Sunday visited Irbid to review the progress of the "Income generating Food-Processing enterprise" sponsored by the GFJW, according to a Royal Court statement.

The food-processing project was started in 1993 to provide domestic-style meals for working women, create employment opportunities for underprivileged women and generate additional income to help families meet their basic needs and raise standards of living. The project provides the

GFJW with a sustainable source of income to improve and expand their services, and to finance other development projects for women, the statement said.

To promote self-reliance, the project also offers courses in textiles, sewing, embroidery, flower arrangement, music and art, and offers poor women small loans to start individual income-generating projects. The project further serves its whole community by providing free medical aid and intensive Tawjihi evening classes for students.

Queen Noor distributed certificates to 16 of the project's outstanding graduates

and opened the project's new building which will house a new kitchen.

The Queen also opened an exhibition of products manufactured at the project and toured its classrooms and facilities.

Queen Noor spoke with the women and commended them on their effort and dedication. She expressed her hope that the project would provide a model of individual commitment, self-reliance and community service to meet the development needs of the people in harmony with the country's natural environment.

The Queen also inaugurated the Eidun Ladies Association kindergarten. The association, a member of the GFJW, is a non-profit association dedicated to enhancing community welfare through projects and workshops that increase awareness of important issues, including environmental protection, and AIDS prevention, among others.

Queen Noor, accompanied by Mrs. Noor Izzedine, was received by the Minister of Social Development Mohammad Sogor, the governor of Irbid, the chief of police in Irbid, the head of Irbid intelligence and GFJW President Haifa Abu Ghazaleh.

Labour minister stresses urgency of public awareness of birth spacing

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Labour Khaled Ghazawi has said that there is a need to guide the public on the importance of birth spacing and other programmes to safeguard the health of mothers and children and to control excessive population growth, but such programmes should be in conformity with the teaching of Islam and in harmony with Jordanian tradition.

In an address at the opening of a workshop on population and development and family planning.

Mr. Ghazawi said that achieving a balance between population growth and the requirements of comprehensive development has become a national prerequisite, drawing the attention of officials at the highest level.

The five-day workshop is organised by the National Population Commission (NPC) in cooperation with the European Union (EU) delegation office in Amman.

NPC Secretary General Nabih Salameh urged all concerned authorities and public institutions to work towards spreading awareness about the adverse impact of high population growth on development and the quality of life.

Family planning and more efficient use of natural re-



Minister of Labour Khaled Ghazawi (centre) flanked by National Population Commission Secretary General Nabih Salameh (L) and European Union Representative in Jordan Jean Pierre Pierard, Sunday chairs the opening of a seminar on population and birth spacing needs (Petra photo)

sources can help achieve the goals of socio-economic development and ensure a better standard of living for families, added Mr. Salameh.

A total of 70 participants from private and public sector institutions are taking part in the workshop which is slated to tackle population

policies, mother and child health and family planning, including birth spacing and other related topics.

Also on the agenda are such issues as working women, protection of the environment, natural resources and the role of the mid-wives

in helping to implement birth spacing programmes.

The workshop comes close on the heels of a Ministry of Education sponsored seminar on Sept. 17 which discussed the role of education in spreading awareness and information about birth control and birth spacing.

Jordanians studying in India are plague-free — embassy

AMMAN (J.T.) — None of the estimated 34,000 Jordanian students living in India have been struck by the highly contagious pneumonic plague which has broken out in the district of western India, according to an official at the Indian embassy in Amman Sunday.

The official said that to date, none of the non-Indian nationals living in the country have been reported to be infected with the plague and local authorities have taken under control.

He said, however, there are Jordanian students residing in Bombay.

The embassy official was commenting on recent contacts between the Jordanian and Indian governments concerning the well-being of the Jordanian student population in India.

Prime Minister Abdullah II said he was reported by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, as instructing the foreign ministry to take pre-

cautionary measures in ensuring the health safety of the students.

Petra said that Jordan's ambassador to India Kamal Al Hassa had reported that there was no danger to the students who, he said, live in areas still unaffected by the plague.

Ministry Secretary General Nayef Hadid received in his office Sunday Indian Ambassador A.K. Budhiraja to enquire about the general health situation in the affected regions and requested that the Indian government extend help to the Jordanian students and ensure their safety.

The ambassador, said Petra, told Mr. Hadid that the situation in all the affected areas was under control by the health authorities.

According to the agency, the Council of Ministers Saturday reviewed measures that could be taken to protect Jordanian students from the plague.

Professionals to address media role in democracy

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prominent media professionals will gather for two days beginning Tuesday to participate in a seminar designed to address "The Role of the Media in a Democracy — the Case of Jordan."

Co-organised by the Centre for Strategic Studies of the University of Jordan and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the seminar will explore the role of the Jordanian press, television and radio in the democratisation process as well as analyse the changing role of those channels since 1989.

It will then move on to various discussions of the media coverage of the peace process in Jordan, including presentations on the foreign media's perception and the opposition's view in this arena.

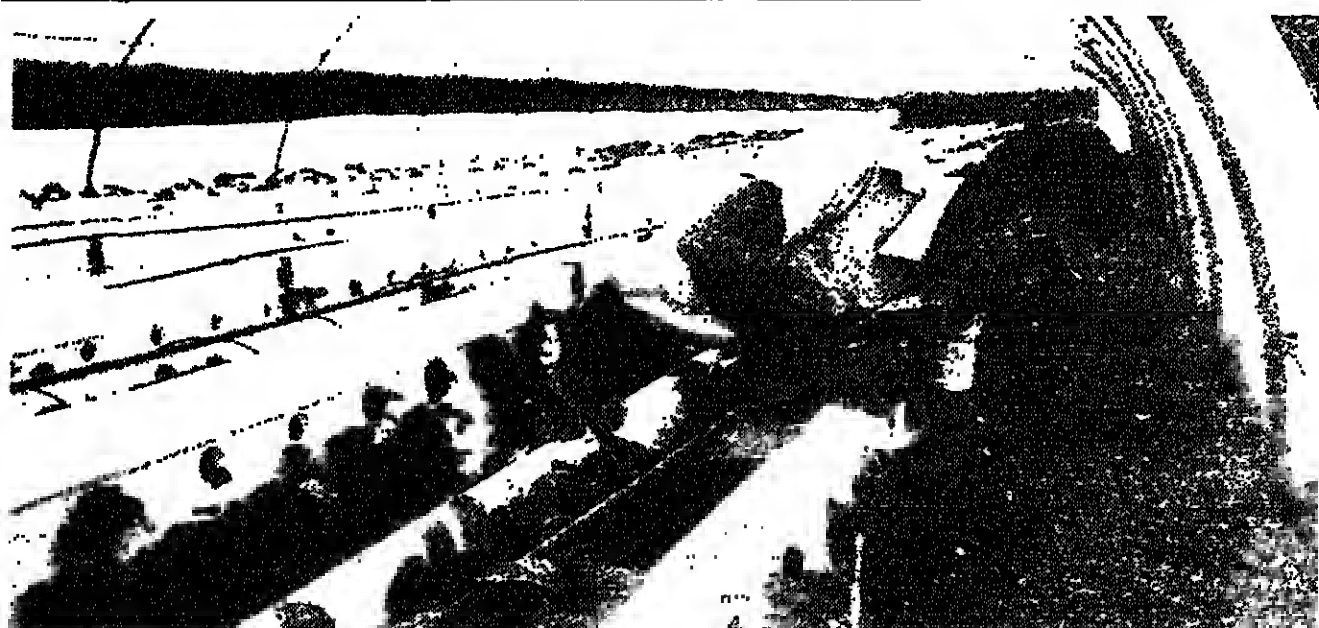
On Wednesday, panelists

and speakers will take up the subject of journalism as a craft, focusing on the need for further training and the problems of human resources in the Jordanian media.

Also on the agenda are discussions of ethics in the media and freedom of the press.

Editors-in-chief, journalists, columnists, media experts, official spokespersons, and senior analysts are scheduled to participate in panel discussions and present papers which will culminate in a final panel discussion on "The Media in Jordan and the Requirements for the New Era," as well as a report and suggestions for future steps and a presentation of the impressions of participating German media consultants.

The seminar will be held at the University of Jordan and is open to the public.



One of the more advanced, water-conserving irrigation systems, used here to help in the cultivation of strawberries

Ministry defends agricultural water price hike

AMMAN (Petra) — In an apparent response to the controversy caused by the hiking of agricultural water prices from six fils to 15 fils per cubic metre, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation Sunday said each cubic metre of water pumped to farmers in the Jordan Valley costs the country 25 fils, and the farmers have been paying only 20 per cent of this cost.

The ministry said the farmers have a duty to share part of the burden on the Jordan Valley Authority

(JVA) and the ministry in supplying irrigation water and implementing projects to increase food production.

Farmers who utilise smaller amounts of water, particularly vegetable growers, are not expected to be significantly affected by the hike, said a ministry statement which added that the increased water cost would help prevent waste and force the farmers to rationalise water use at a time when the Kingdom is suffering severe shortages.

According to ministry sources, more than 70 per cent of all water used in Jordan flows to the farming sector.

The ministry's statement follows a sit-in organised in the Jordan Valley Saturday by local farmers in protest against the government's decision to raise the price of water pumped to their lands.

Head of the Farmers Federation Rakan Faour said that the move was unjust and he appealed to the govern-

ment to rescind its decision.

Several Parliament members and heads of trade unions took part in the sit-in during which the federation said that a general strike by farmers is scheduled for Wednesday when farmers would meet at the federation headquarters in the Jordan Valley and announce that they would stop sending their children to school and resort to hunger strikes unless the government responds favourably to their demand.

WHAT'S GOING ON

PLAY

Play in Arabic entitled "The Body Test/the Existence" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 7:30 p.m.

LECTURE

Lecture in Arabic entitled "The New World Order and the Arab Region" by Mr. Michael Kun at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:30 p.m.

RECEPTION

Reception for graduates of German-speaking universities and educational institutes at Goethe-Institut at 6:30 p.m.

FILMS

★ French film entitled "Nana (1926) at the French Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

★ Spanish film entitled "Amor Brujo" at the Instituto Cervantes (the Spanish Cultural Centre) at 6:00 p.m. (Tel. 610858).

LECTURE

★ Lecture in Arabic (with written-English handout) with a slide show entitled "Mafrag Through Time: New Facts Emerge Through the Discoveries of the Historical Eras in the Sites of Al Fdein, Erdaab, and Umm-El-Jimal" by Mr. Abdul Qader Al Husan at the Friends of Archaeology Centre at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

★ Exhibition of paintings entitled "Donation" by Laila Bustani at the Royal Cultural Centre.

★ Exhibition of works by Farouq Zadeh entitled "Faces, Places, and Ideas" at Goethe-Institut (Tel. 641993).

★ Painting exhibition entitled "The Other Sides of Mastery" by Ibrahim Shalabi at the Galleria Jordan, Mecca Street (Tel. 816755).

★ Exhibition of paintings by Sahib Ahmad at the Phoenix Art Gallery (Tel. 695291).

★ Jordan River Designs, a Save the Children project, exhibition of handicraft goods at the Forte Grand Amman Hotel, Mezzanine Floor (10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.).

NEWS IN BRIEF

King congratulates Yemen

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday sent a cable to Yemeni President Abdullah Saleh congratulating him on the 10th anniversary of the September 26 Revolution. In his cable King Hussein expressed heartfelt congratulations and those of the Jordanian people and government to President Saleh, and wished him continued good health and happiness and the people of Yemen further progress and prosperity.

the Palestinian territories was aimed at identifying the economic and trade potentials of that region. Accompanied by a delegation of businessmen, Mr. Horoby said he hoped the visit, the first by a British delegation to the self-rule areas, would yield good results and open the way for trade between the two sides. Describing his visit to Jordan as extremely successful, Mr. Horoby said it would no doubt help promote Jordanian-British trade relations.

British business team ends visit

AMMAN (J.T.) — Derek Hornby, chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board, wound up his visit to Jordan Sunday and crossed the Hussein Bridge to the self-rule area of the West Bank after holding several days of talks with officials and businessmen on prospects of expanding commercial ties. In a departure statement, Mr. Hornby said that his visit to

Zarqa police arrest smugglers

ZARQA (Petra) — Zarqa police patrols have seized 19,301 cartons of smuggled cigarettes and 15,000 plastic lighters hidden on a farm in Duleil area, according to Zarqa Public Security Department Director Brig. Abdul Qader Al Quraan. Brig. Quraan said the smugglers were arrested and referred to the Customs Court.

Under the patronage of
Her Royal Highness Princess Basma

THE AL HUSSEIN SOCIETY
for the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped
has the pleasure of inviting you to a

"FESTIVAL DAY"

on Friday, September 30, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
in celebration of the 10th anniversary
of the opening of the Amman Centre.

There will be sale of food, sweets, books, toys and crafts as well as music, pony rides, games, and "Ninja Turtles" available throughout the day.

The Al Hussein Society is located off the 7th circle, at the rear of the Royal Automobile Club.

Message from

vis a vis

ELITE DISCOTHEQUE

Fitted to please, elitist, loud & hilarious music, explodes your spirit, always ready for food, drink and fun.

For an unusual evening out...

vis a vis please.

It's funtastic

OPENING SOON Swaffney 816690

Indian plague epidemic is under control — government

NEW DELHI (R) — The Indian government said Sunday that an outbreak of the plague in the western city of Surat was under control and the country did not face the threat of an epidemic.

"The government is fully prepared and there is going to be no large-scale outbreak," Health Secretary M.S. Dayal told a news conference in the capital New Delhi.

Mr. Dayal was part of a delegation which visited Surat Saturday to take stock of pneumonic plague.

"In Surat itself the situation has been brought under control," Mr. Dayal said. "The number of pneumonic cases coming to the hospital is not increasing. It is evidence the epidemic is not spreading."

Mr. Dayal said the fact that about 100 cases of suspected plague were emerging in Surat each day "is not an alarming situation," adding: "Had it been a continuing situation, it would have been in thousands by now."

The health official said the highest level of the Indian government was concerned about the sickness and asked the estimated 300,000 Surat residents who had fled the city to return. "We are appealing to those who left to come back to the city," he said.

About 2,000 workers split

into 200 teams fanned out across the city as part of an intensified drive to vanquish pneumonic plague which has triggered a mass exodus from Surat, 270 kilometres north of Bombay.

Bonfires blazed in the streets as city workers and residents worked to rid the city of waste and animal carcasses which can harbour plague bacteria.

Six more people died overnight, raising the official death toll to 42. Doctors and residents said many deaths had not been registered and estimated more than 100 have been killed in the past six days.

Gujarat state declared Surat "plague affected," giving officials authority to impose emergency measures such as ordering all businesses to close.

But no such order was given and officials appeared keen to quell the panic which has driven at least 300,000 people out of Surat over the past few days.

There were reports of plague cases in other cities but health officials in the capital New Delhi said they had not been confirmed.

Supplies of the antibiotic Tetracycline, used against the

plague, were all but exhausted in major cities. Even in the small town of Rampur in northern Uttar Pradesh state Tetracycline could not be found in chemists' shops.

Officials said some 386 people in Surat were suspected to have contracted the pneumonic plague. The disease spreads between humans from contaminated sputum and can swiftly destroy a victim's lungs. The figure was up from 327 late Saturday.

But they said efforts to distribute eight million antibiotic capsules and urge people with fever and coughs to seek quick medical attention were paying off.

"Patients are being admitted at an earlier stage," said Dr. Kalpan Patel, speaking from the isolation ward in Civil Hospital.

"I hope to go home today," said Manu Ramesh, a 25-year-old patient. "I've been here for the last four days and today is the first day I have actually sat up."

India has asked the World Health Organisation (WHO) for help in its battle against the plague, officials said Sunday.

"We have asked the WHO for diagnostic reagents to test human and rodent samples for plague antibodies," said Dr. K.K. Datta, director of India's National Institute of Communicable Diseases.

The reagents would enable authorities to test samples of plague-infected sputum to find out how powerful the bacteria are and how best to combat the disease.

Dr. Datta told Reuters the Indian government had asked for some 15,000 doses of vaccines from the Geneva-based organisation to protect health workers in case the disease persists.

"The vaccines must be on their way," Dr. Datta said. Authorities are reluctant to order a national vaccination campaign because the immunity that vaccines provides lasts for only a limited time and could therefore instill a false sense of confidence.

Instead, authorities have told people to watch out for symptoms of the plague — fever, cough, swollen lymph glands — and seek immediate treatment if they appear.

Vaccines, however, are recommended for high-risk groups such as laboratory personnel working on plague or field workers in plague-affected areas.

Indian newspapers said the government had asked for assistance from the United States and Russia.

Both countries have experience in handling plague. In Colorado, 15 cases of plague were reported in 1988. Russia has reported sporadic cases of plague. There was no official confirmation of the reports.



A pneumonic plague-infected child is held holding a saline drip, at the New Civil Hospital through the isolation ward by her mother, in Surat (AFP photo)

Colombo rejects rebel truce demand

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan Prime Minister Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga has rejected a Tamil guerrilla request for a ceasefire but is sending a peace mission to talk to the rebels, the independent Sunday leader newspaper said.

It said Ms. Kumaratunga plans to send a peace mission to the northern Tamil guerrilla stronghold of Jaffna shortly for initial talks with a team of negotiators named by the rebels, fighting for independence in the island's north and east.

Government officials were not immediately available to confirm the story.

Last week, Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte said peace talks between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas will go on despite a rebel suicide attack which sank one of the navy's biggest patrol boats.

The Tigers were believed to have staged the attack to put pressure on the government for a ceasefire before peace talks began, military sources said.

Tiger Chief Tamil Velupillai Prabhakaran pressed for a ceasefire in his recent reply to a letter from Ms. Kumaratunga inviting the rebels for talks to end their 11-year-old secessionist campaign, in which more than 50,000 people have died.

Mr. Prabhakaran said it would be difficult to resume negotiations while fighting was going on and that continuing oavy attacks on fishermen in the northern waters were an impediment to talks.

The Sunday Leader said Ms. Kumaratunga was to discuss the possibility of a ceasefire with her military leaders, said to be wary of the rebel demand fearing it could be

used by the Tigers to rearm and regroup before resuming hostilities.

The Tigers killed or captured 25 sailors after ramming the navy patrol vessel with two boats packed with explosives Monday night.

The rebels are believed to have captured that boat's commanding officer and seven others in the attack, military sources said.

Ms. Kumaratunga eased a four-year-old economic embargo on the rebel-controlled north soon after winning last month's general election.

The rebels responded by freeing 10 policemen held hostage since June 1990, when they broke off peace talks with the former United National Party government.

Mr. Ratwatte has said the government would go ahead with plans to use force to crush the Tigers if peace talks fail.

Balladur popularity falls sharply

PARIS (AFP) — French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur's popularity fell back sharply this month from his record-breaking 63 per cent in August as tax rises brought the population back to earth, a poll published Sunday showed.

The poll, published in the weekly Journal Du Dimanche, gave Mr. Balladur 52 per cent approval, almost wiping out the 13 points he had gained since June largely on the strength of action in Rwanda, the capture of terrorist Carlos and a crackdown on suspected Islamic militants.

Since then the government has announced forthcoming

risks in the price of petrol, tobacco, the television licence, and is seen as going back on a promise to cut income tax.

The ailing President Francois Mitterrand's popularity also fell six points to 45 per cent amid perceptions that he has become weak as a result of his prostate cancer as well as revelations about his past role in the wartime pro-Nazi Vichy government.

Accusations of corruption against a key member of Mr. Balladur's conservative government could damage his chances in presidential elections due next year.

Industry Minister Gerard Longuet was accused last

week over the construction of his second home in the French Riviera resort of Saint-Tropez, said to be under-priced and paid for with disguised backhanders.

If the allegations by anti-corruption magistrate Renaud Vau Ruynebecke are true, it would deprive Mr. Balladur of a key element in his presidential strategy to defeat Gaullist leader Jacques Chirac, head of the Rally For the Republic (RPR).

The 64-year-old prime minister had been counting on the backing of part of the RPR and most of the centrist right component of the ruling coalition, the Union for French Democracy (UDF).

Clinton stumps for Democrats

NEW YORK (AFP) — U.S. President Bill Clinton this weekend took to the campaign trail, polishing up his own accomplishments, in a bid to stump up support for beleaguered Democrats heading for legislative elections.

The president's approval ratings have been sagging recently and some analysts say Democrats — some who have taken pains to distance themselves from him — may suffer in the upcoming mid-term elections in November.

The success of Mr. Clinton's political agenda, and ultimately his own political survival, depends on ensuring that Democrats continue to control both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

It is classic Clinton that kicks into high gear on the campaign trail and it sounded as if he were running for office when he returned to Missouri, which gave him a 10-point margin in the presidential race against former Republican President George Bush.

"You gave me a resounding victory in that election. And I am grateful for that," he told a crowd of Democrats at a fundraiser for Senate candidate Alan Wheat.

"We have brought real change, and we are moving in the right direction. We don't want to turn back now and give it back to the (Republicans)."

Administration officials have been frustrated with the media for not highlighting their successes and exasperated with Republicans for what they say is a distortion of their accomplishments.

Mr. Clinton this weekend beseeched party faithfuls to spread the Democratic gospel.

In Chicago; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Kansas City, Missouri and New York, he repeated the litany of his accomplishments: A vibrant economy, 4.3 million new jobs, an anti-crime bill and badly needed budget cuts.

"That's the real record," he said emphatically to a room packed with loyal Missourians Saturday night at a fundraiser. "Now what's the problem? I'll tell you what the problem is. Number one, nobody knows it!"

"I am asking you to go out and tell people the facts. They will peddle fear," he said of the Republicans. "We will peddle hope."

Aboard Air Force One, his political advisers and Democratic National Committee Chairman David Wilhelm conceded Democrats had not fought back forcefully enough against Republican efforts to muddy their record.

"Many Americans are still profoundly upset with the political system, profoundly disillusioned, even cynical. And they are in the mood to throw the rascals out without distinguishing who the rascals are," he said at a Minneapolis fundraiser.

Britain is politically worn out — study

PARIS (AFP) — Britain has become politically "worn out" in its struggle to reconcile an insular past with the modern world, and in particular with Europe, a French report says.

The French Institute for International Relations devotes no less than a third of its annual world report on Britain, calling it "the laboratory of Europe."

"To study the United Kingdom is to study decline," says the introduction to the chapter, which includes a section entitled "Britain's political identity: Worn out?"

Describing 1990s Britain as among other things "closed-up" and "hypocritical," the report says its "identity is hazy around... elements (which are) worn out, tired, empty, either in part or in full."

Central to Britain's problems is its ambivalent attitude to Europe, the report says. "Britain belongs to Europe... but at the same

time it is an island with its face turned against the continent," the report says.

"England insularity is at the heart, and almost the motor of its national identity."

The report begins by outlining Britain's illustrious past — the empire, the Commonwealth — but says that "something starts going wrong in the 1960s, soon turning the country into the 'sick man of Europe.'"

"The 1980s under (Prime Minister Margaret) Thatcher, far from rejuvenating the British political system, make it increasingly authoritarian," it laments, citing increased centralisation and strengthened police powers.

The economic recovery of the 1990s might have been expected to help pull the country out of its malaise, the report says.

But this, "far from renewing the strength of institutions, has merely stressed all

that is closed-up and even hypocritical" it says, citing constitutional political infighting and tabloid sex scandals.

Areas singled out for particular criticism include Britain's education system. "The 'British disease' comes from the deficiencies of its education and training systems," it says, adding that Britain has "allowed itself to be left well behind" in these areas.

The report is not all bad. In between the criticism it praises Britain's role as the home of the mother of parliaments, and as the founders of the industrial revolution. Institutions such as the BBC also come in for plaudits.

But it concludes with a warning that Europe should look to Britain to see what problems may lie ahead.

"The United Kingdom is a laboratory, fascinating because its attempt at reconciliation brings to Europe an experience which it should at least reflect upon."

Kozyrev: U.S. envoys prefer Caucasus instability to Russian intervention

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev has accused "certain U.S. diplomats" of preferring continued instability in the Russian Caucasus to the prospect of an intervention by Russian troops to ease problems there.

"It is absurd," Mr. Kozyrev said during an interview on Russian Television. "Certain United States diplomats would prefer instability in the Caucasus, rather than see 'a reinforcement of Russia's role there.'"

"No other country apart from us has the slightest chance of playing a part in regulating the conflicts" in the Caucasus region, the foreign minister said.

Referring to the deadlock in western Georgia between government forces and separatists in the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, Mr. Kozyrev noted that Russian troops were trying "at this very moment... to open a route which is not only very important for Georgia and Abkhazia but also for Azerbaijan and Armenia."

The troops were in addition "working on the return of Georgian refugees to

Abkhazia, and our troops are not here to guard the so-called 'Abkhazo-Georgian frontier,' and prevent the refugees from returning, but to maintain security in the region so the refugees can return."

Russian peacekeeping troops have been deployed in the frontier zone between the separatist Georgian region of Abkhazia, in the west of the republic, and the rest of the country. Separatist forces drove Georgian government troops from Abkhazia last autumn.

Mr. Kozyrev added that Russia was trying to achieve "a certain modus vivendi... the establishment of a particular legal status for Abkhazia, but above all to preserve Georgia's territorial integrity."

In an earlier diatribe published Saturday in the Kommersant daily, Mr. Kozyrev warned that elections might vote in a "right-wing extremist government" if the Russian government were "not given the means to speed up its push towards external markets, and complained that some Western governments were still approaching the

issue of trade with Russia "based on the old criteria." And President Boris Yeltsin slammed the United States shortly before leaving for London ahead of a summit meeting in Washington next week.

"Problems between Russia and the United States have been mounting up this year," Mr. Yeltsin said as he prepared to board a plane for London.

He called for "a more egalitarian" relationship, saying the United States had exerted "pressure" at times. "Problems cannot be resolved without Russia," he added.

Elsewhere, the presidents of the Caucasian republics of Ingushetia and North Ossetia said Saturday they hoped thousands of Ingush refugees, forced to flee ethnic fighting in North Ossetia in 1992, would soon be able to return home.

Russian Nationalities Minister Nikolai Egorov, Ingushetia President Ruslan Aushev and Akarsbek Galazov, the North Ossetian head of state, met at the airport in Vladikavkaz, the North Ossetian capital.

Controversial Basque film wins top award

SAN SEBASTIAN, Spain (R) — The controversial Spanish film "Dias Contados" (Running Out Of Time) by Basque director Imanol Uribe won the top prize at an international film festival.

The film, awarded the Golden Shell, sparked controversy at the San Sebastian Festival in the fiercely nationalistic Basque country because of its portrayal of a separatist ETA guerrilla who has a doomed love affair with a junkie prostitute. Critics loved the thriller's style and pace, but police clashed sporadically throughout the 10-day festival with radical youths supporting the separatists' cause. Uribe's protagonist is a member of Madrid Commando of ETA (Basque Homeland and Freedom), which has been responsible for many of the group's biggest acts of violence in its 26-year fight for an independent Basque state.

The Basque director has dealt with the theme of ETA in three previous films — The Burgos Trial, The Segovia Escape and The Death Of Mikel. In "Dias Contados", which is loosely based on a story by crime novelist Juan Madrid, the main character is a seasoned ETA militant who falls in love with a teenage drug addict while he is on a car bomb attack mission against a Madrid police station. He is disillusioned by what he sees as incompetence in the upper echelons of ETA's military command and is captivated by her sense of total liberty mixed with fatalism. Other prizes awarded at the 42nd International Film Festival in San Sebastian included the Judges' Special Prize, which was divided between the Austrian film "Vor Lauter Feigheit Gibt Es Kein Erbarmen" by Andreas Gruber and the British Second Best by Chris Menges. The Silver Shell for the best director went to Briton Danny Boyle for Shallow Grave. Silver Shells for best actress and best actor were given to Ning Jing of China for her role in "Paoda Shuangdeng" and to Javier Bardem of Spain for his work in "Dias Contados" and "El Detective 'Y La Muerte' by Gonzalo Suarez. Bardem was also awarded the Fernando Rey Prize for Best European Actor for his part in Uribe's film.

Lana Turner gets career award in San Sebastian

SAN SEBASTIAN, Spain (R) — Hollywood actress Lana Turner, 74, won a Lifetime Achievement Award at Europe's oldest film festival, the International Cinema Festival in San Sebastian, which ended Saturday. Actor William Hurt presented the award — a reproduction of a characteristic street lamp of the northern Spanish city — to an emotional Turner. The actress was nominated for an Oscar for her performance in the 1957 film Peyton Place. Her other film credits include The Postman Always Rings Twice, Madam X, Johnny Eager and The Bad And The Beautiful, but she is perhaps best known as one of America's most glamorous pin-up girls of the 1940s. Turner was diagnosed with throat cancer two years ago, but appeared in good health and even managed to scream with astonishment when the award was announced.

Luchie Gutierrez, Social Welfare Department provincial officer, told the official Philippine News Agency that food rations were being air-dropped to residents in villages that could not be reached. Heavy monsoon rains continued to pound the Pinatubo area and the towns at its base Sunday and disaster officials said lahars flows were monitored at river channels.

Philippine mudflow evacuees rise to 60,000

MANILA (RAFP) — Air force helicopters Sunday plucked marooned residents from rooftops in villages isolated by mudflows from Pinatubo volcano as new rains swelled the number of evacuees to 60,000, officials said.

No new casualties were added to the 18 reported killed when debris from Mount Pinatubo's violent 1991 eruption were washed down from its flanks by rainwater and lashed at several villages in Pampanga before dawn Thursday.

Several people sustained severe burns as the mudflow, or lahar, was still superheated three years after the eruption.

President Fidel Ramos Sunday visited the province, north of Manila, which bore the brunt of the damage, to see the situation and ordered the release of 10 million pesos (\$392,000) for relief operations. He also gave 10,000 pesos to the families of each fatality.

Pampanga Governor Ben Gmoa said more than 1,500 persons still remained trapped in Farulung village, Bacolor town, which was the hardest hit.

The Social Welfare Department said at least 60,000 people were displaced from their homes in the towns of Bacolor and Porac alone and are now in evacuation cen-

tres. About 1,700 houses were buried, mostly up to the roof.

Air force helicopters were able to evacuate several marooned residents, while other were evacuated by bus or army trucks.

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Asia tightens drug laws; West decries hanging of Dutchman

HONG KONG (AFP) — The hanging of a Dutch national in Singapore last week for drug smuggling brought cries of protest from West, but faced with major trafficking problems, Asian governments continue to toughen drug laws.

"We cannot risk abolishing capital punishment for drug traffickers at this stage just to satisfy human rights advocates," said a senior judge in Malaysia, where some 100 people have been executed for drug offences since 1981.

The number included 30 foreigners whose appeals for clemency were rejected outright by Kuala Lumpur — drawing substantial criticism from Western countries and human rights groups.

Under the country's drug laws, anyone found in possession of 15 grammes (0.53 ounces) or more of heroin, 200 grammes (7.05 ounces) of cannabis or a kilogramme of (2.2 pounds) of opium is presumed to be trafficking and faces death.

A large number of Asians have been executed in Singapore for drug crimes in recent years, but the death of a Westerner — Dutchman Johannes Van Damme — has brought home the issue of Asia's draconian drug laws to the West.

Mr. Van Damme was hanged Friday after being caught at Singapore's Changi International Airport in 1991 with 4.3 kilogrammes (9.46

pounds) of heroin concealed in the false bottom of his suitcase.

Drug trafficking in Singapore carried the mandatory death sentence.

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, 79 people have been executed for drug trafficking in Singapore since 1975.

More than half were from other Asian countries and one was from Nigeria.

About another 50, mostly foreigners, are awaiting trial or appeals, are awaiting trial or appeals.

In China, a war against an escalating drug problem — one that had been almost wiped out by the Communists after 1949 — has resulted in the execution of 1,400 people for drug related crimes in the first quarter of 1994 alone.

Official newspapers have said that 561 foreign drug traffickers were arrested in China between January 1992 and March 1993 and that several foreigners, mostly from South East Asian countries, were sentenced to death.

No Westerners have been executed, but a handful have received prison sentences of between four and 15 years for possession and smuggling of marijuana since 1991.

Vietnam, which also is facing a growing drug problem, also imposes the death penalty.

Since 1992, eight drug traffickers — including a Hong

Kong citizen — have been sentenced to death.

In Thailand the trafficking in or smuggling of more than 100 grammes (3.5 ounces) of drugs is punished by death.

A Thai official said there were unspecified "large" number of foreigners sentenced to death on drug offences. Most were in the process of requesting a royal pardon, or had had stays of execution.

The death penalty in Thailand is often commuted to life imprisonment and of the 2,500 foreign inmates in Thai jails 90 per cent are serving sentences for drug-related cases.

In the Philippines the death penalty was restored in January for several drug-related offences but no convictions have yet been made.

Indonesian authorities have also been pressing for a strengthening of their existing capital punishment laws, under which drug smuggling and possession can be punished by death.

Five Indonesians, one Malaysian, three Thai and one Indian are currently on death row for drug offences.

The Pakistani government also recently decided to change its existing drug laws — which have a maximum sentence of life imprisonment — to allow the death penalty for drug smugglers.

In Bangladesh eight foreigners have been sentenced to death for drug trafficking

Jurassic Park consultant extracts dinosaur DNA

LONDON (AFP) — A U.S. dinosaur expert who was consultant for the film Jurassic Park has succeeded in extracting DNA, which determines how living beings develop, from a tyrannosaurus fossil, the Sunday Times reported. Jack Horner would soon be publishing "sensational" evidence that the dinosaur DNA resembles that of birds, the paper said.

"If true, this would mean that dinosaurs did not die out altogether 65 million years ago as generally assumed, but that some survived and evolved into birds," it said. Mr. Horner is one of the leaders of a group of palaeontologists who claim that dinosaurs were probably warm-blooded, fast-moving animals, with many resemblances to modern birds.

Michael Crichton's book Jurassic Park and Steven Spielberg's film based on it, postulates that dinosaurs can be recreated from ancient DNA, though scientists generally agree it would not be possible.

Bosnian Serbs pile pressure on U.N.

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Bosnian Serbs Sunday stepped up their campaign of intimidation against United Nations forces in response to a NATO air strike and the imposition of tighter sanctions by the Security Council.

The commander of the Bosnian Serb army, General Ratko Mladic, in a veiled threat to the U.N. peacekeeping force, told their commanders he could not "take responsibility" for the safety of U.N. operations on his territory.

The main U.N. relief agency said stocks of food in Sarajevo, where Serb action has cut off aid convoys and forced the U.N. to suspend its air bridge, would run out in two weeks.

"We have stocks of food for about two weeks," said Kris Janowski, spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees.

Gen. Mladic's pronouncement, in a letter to the U.N. military commander in former Yugoslavia, French General Bertrand De Lapresle, was the latest in a series of threats to follow Thursday's NATO air strike on a Bosnian Serb tank.

The Bosnian Serb Army has also halted U.N. military and aid convoys, forced the closure of Sarajevo Airport and prevented U.N. troops from trying to check that Serbs had removed banned guns from a heavy weapons exclusion zone around the city.

In a further move to pressure the U.N., the Serbs have

rescinded permission for U.N. helicopter flights over their soil and warned that they could not guarantee the safety of flights to Sarajevo Airport, U.N. spokesman said.

In his letter Gen. Mladic said the air raid had destroyed private houses and damaged a school. The U.N. said an unoccupied Serb tank was hit, in what it described as an appropriate response to Serb attacks that had wounded two of its peacekeepers.

Gen. Mladic said the United Nations should not plan any operations on the territory of the self-styled Bosnian Serb Republic until it had made clear it was a neutral force.

"Due to the latest crime for which you and your forces are responsible, we cannot take responsibility for your activities in the Bosnian Serb Republic, so we beg you not to plan these until you convince us of the full neutrality of your forces."

"I expect your positive steps in this direction in the next two weeks," he said.

Serb forces surrounding Sarajevo have tightened their grip on the Bosnian capital in the weeks following their rejection of an international peace plan for Bosnia.

A United Nations official indicated Sunday that the blockade of gas and electricity supplies to the city imposed by the Serbs 10 days ago may be about to be relaxed following an agreement at U.N.-sponsored talks Saturday.

But the official said whether or not the gas taps were opened and the electricity grid switched on still depended on Serb clearances for repair teams.

The Bosnian Serb leadership, however, made clear it was in no mood to compromise despite increased U.N. sanctions, the NATO air raid and its abandonment by the Serbian-led government in Belgrade.

Momcilo Krajisnik, speaker of the Bosnian Serb National Assembly, said: "We must direct our force to our defence and in that case we have the right to choose the means."

"If necessary, with the aim of defending our people, we will introduce a blockade of the Muslims and Croats and also of UNPROFOR (U.N. Protection Force)," he was quoted as saying by the Bosnian Serb News Agency.

Mr. Krajisnik, a hardliner, criticised the tougher U.N. sanctions imposed on the Bosnian Serbs but made clear they did not intend to reverse their rejection of the international peace plan for Bosnia.

"The Serbian people rejected the maps in a referendum and not a single figure or political body has the authority to accept them," Mr. Krajisnik said.

The central aspect of the peace plan is a map dividing Bosnia roughly evenly between the Muslim-Croat alliance and the Bosnian Serbs, who currently hold about 70 per cent of the former Yugoslav republic.

The NATO strike and the fresh sanctions were part of an international push to isolate the intransigent Bosnian Serbs and force them to accept the peace plan drawn up by the United States, Russia, Germany, Britain and France.

The new punitive measures, agreed by the U.N. Security Council Friday, ban foreign travel by leaders of the Bosnian Serb Republic and trade with the territory.

At the same time, the Security Council eased sanctions against rump Yugoslavia, restoring international air and sporting links, in return for Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic's military blockade of the Bosnian Serbs.

Sanctions-bound Bosnian Serbs, bitter at being branded international pariahs for rejecting a peace plan, have retreated into the Balkans equivalent of the laager mentality.

They are also placing their faith in rescue by brother Serbs in Belgrade despite the fact that rump Yugoslavia imposed a total trade embargo on the Bosnian Serb Republic.

Belgrade's decision to cut the supplies lifeline which has nourished the Serb self-styled republic through 30 months of war was a tough psychological blow, but most Serbs in Pale, the small ski resort turned self-styled capital, appear to believe their historic ties mean the Belgrade blockade cannot last for long.

A tour of shops and the local market here confirms the sanctions double-whammy has thus far had little impact, the rapidly emptying shelves of the Belgrade-supplied state-run shops are the only evidence of shortages.

For Mirna Asonja, 22, who fled Sarajevo at the start of the conflict, Belgrade's move was "the biggest disappointment of the war because we have always seen Serbia as our mother, and now she has introduced sanctions."

Her husband Goran, 31, a mechanical engineer, said the move was "depressing," adding: "I feel that I'm under a bell jar in a laboratory. You put the mouse in the jar and wait to see how long it can survive."

"We can survive much longer than the mouse because the bell jar cannot fit tightly on this mountainous terrain, so air is always getting in."

Reports abound of hard-line Croats from Herzegovina — who oppose the troubled Croat-Muslim federation — supplying the Serbs here with petrol, and the sheer size of the territories controlled by the Serbs mean they have ample fresh fruit, vegetables and meat, while the picturesque pine-covered slopes surrounding Pale provide ready supplies of wood for heating and cooking.

Homes are already stockpiling food and wood for the winter, and Serbs here explain away electricity cuts as ongoing repairs to power lines.



A man pushes wood, jerry-cans with water and his grandson on a trolley in downtown Sarajevo. With the turning-off of utilities Sarajevans spend their days in search for water and wood like in the darkest days of the siege (AFP photo)

Sinn Fein leader starts U.S. tour in Boston

BOSTON (AP) — Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams has begun a two-week U.S. tour aimed at building American support for a peace settlement in Northern Ireland palatable to Irish Republicans.

Mr. Adams said Sinn Fein, the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) political organisation, would consider a coalition government with the British, who currently rule Northern Ireland as a province.

But the Irish "have the intelligence and the wit and the right to govern ourselves, whatever we decide," he said.

U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy joined Mr. Adams at a news conference when he arrived Saturday in Boston,

which has one of the largest populations of Irish-Americans in the United States.

Mr. Adams and Sen. Kennedy urged British Prime Minister John Major not to get bogged down in seeking a permanent ceasefire from the IRA but should begin negotiating with the group. The IRA declared a ceasefire on Aug. 31.

"What we are interested in... is the future," Mr. Kennedy said. "The actions speak, the violence has halted. It's difficult for many of us to understand why people are carping on the past and not looking for opportunities to advance the cause of peace."

On Friday, Mr. Major told BBC Radio that his government could meet with Sinn Fein by Christmas. Mr. Major has been holding out for more definite assurances that the IRA has laid down its arms for good. Those talks would be about Sinn Fein's participation in negotiations on the future of Northern Ireland.

Mr. Adams' nine-city tour follows U.S. visits earlier this week by four members of the Ulster Unionist Party, a voice of the pro-British Protestant vote, and John Hume, leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, the leading Catholic party in Northern Ireland.

All sides are seeking to sway U.S. opinion. The Protestants worry that the administration may be leaning toward the IRA.

The Clinton administration is weighing financial aid and other incentives to nurture peace prospects.

Soon after Mr. Adams arrived in Boston, pro-British paramilitaries sprayed gunfire outside a pub in North Belfast, Northern Ireland. No injuries were reported.

The outlawed Ulster Freedom Fighters claimed responsibility for the attack. Pro-British extremists have kept up sporadic attacks, including two killings, since the IRA ceasefire announcement.

U.S., N. Korea continue talks despite war games

GENEVA (Agencies) — United States and North Korea experts met Sunday to try to shape an accord to end nuclear tension in East Asia despite angry denunciations by Pyongyang of American naval manoeuvres off its shores.

Diplomats said the always sensitive North's reaction to the war games was inevitable because a top U.S. admiral had said they could be compared to the pressure put on Haiti's military leaders to step aside.

But they doubted the Pyongyang delegation to the Geneva negotiations, now in their third day, would walk out. The U.S. side sought to play down the issue, saying the manoeuvres had no direct link to the talks.

A statement from North Korea's Foreign Ministry said the naval presence amounted to "undisguised military provocations" that could wreck the negotiations and bring an end to a freeze on its atomic power programme.

In Geneva, a North Korean official told Reuters the talks on recasting the programme to ensure it cannot produce nuclear weaponry were continuing normally but added: "Military pressure is not acceptable. We cannot have that and dialogue. That is why we have asked the United States to stop."

The next step depended on U.S. actions, "but I am not in a position to say if we will withdraw," he said.

Sunday's meeting, which followed a full session between delegation chiefs Friday and technical discussions Saturday, was held in the

U.S. mission. Neither side made any comment before they began.

But in briefings Saturday both delegation made clear they remained at odds on basic issues.

Although Pyongyang's top negotiator, First Deputy Foreign Minister Kang Sok-Ju, said he noted "some progress", a senior U.S. official said "fundamental differences" had not narrowed.

Both sides confirmed they were working on a document they would like to complete in the next few days.

The focus of the talks, the latest in a series over the past two years between two countries who had been sworn enemies since the 1950-53 Korean War, is the future of present and planned North Korean reactors producing weapons-grade plutonium.

After negotiations in Geneva last month, Pyongyang agreed to freeze construction of two new graphite models in return for a U.S. pledge that, with other countries, it would help replace them with a light-water variety of reactor.

There are differences over conditions for the exchange and on how North Korea would be compensated for the energy lost from the cancellation of its existing nuclear programme.

It was also clear a major gap remained to be bridged on North Korea's refusal to accept "special inspections" of two sites which could give a clue whether it had earlier worked on nuclear weaponry.

Mr. Kang told reporters

Saturday his country would not accept these inspections, requested by the United Nations nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

On Sunday, North Korea reaffirmed this stance, condemning a new IAEA resolution, which called on Pyongyang to open up all sites to inspection, as an attempt to infringe on its sovereignty.

But in Geneva Mr. Kang said his country would be prepared to "demonstrate the transparency of its nuclear activities" once a new relationship was established with the United States and the light-water reactor programme was well under way.

The senior U.S. official in Geneva, where the American delegation is led by Ambassador-at-large Robert Gallucci, indicated at a news briefing this approach was not acceptable.

"Special inspections have to be an integral part of any settlement we reach... we cannot go far down the road without this issue being cleared up," he said. The time-frame suggested by Mr. Kang — possibly several years — was "implausible."

Earlier this year the IAEA took its complaint against Pyongyang to the U.N., which prepared to vote sanctions against the isolated Communist state. Action was suspended when the new U.S.-North Korean talks were agreed.

Mr. Kang said Sunday the crisis over its suspect nuclear programme would end if Washington provided Pyongyang with light-water reac-

tors (LWRs).

"If we receive LWRs from the U.S. and give up the graphite-moderated reactors, the so-called 'nuclear suspicion' against the DPRK (North Korea) would be totally dispelled," the dispatch, monitored here, quoted Mr. Kang as saying in Geneva Saturday.

"What is important here is firstly that the United States substantially provides the DPRK with light water reactors commensurate with its renunciation of the graphite-moderated reactor programme," said Mr. Kang.

"We will freeze the graphite-moderate reactors conditional on the definite supply of LWRs by the U.S. side," he said.

"The U.S. must definitely guarantee the provision of LWRs and must be fully responsible for this," Mr. Kang said. "This guarantee is the starting-point of the solution of the issue."

Accusing the United States of treating it like Haiti, North Korea threatened Sunday to unfreeze its disputed nuclear programme if Washington applies military pressure.

"If the United States acts recklessly, slighting (North Korea) as it does a small island in the Caribbean, it will have to pay dearly for this," said a Foreign Ministry statement carried by North Korea's official news agency.

It claimed "U.S. military hardline conservatives" were trying to put military pressure on North Korea through general manoeuvres off the Korean coast.

U.N. agencies disagree over Rwanda atrocities

KIGALI (R) — Two United Nations agencies were at loggerheads Sunday over a report by the U.N. refugee agency UNHCR that Tutsi soldiers of the new Rwandan government were systematically killing Hutus.

The U.N. Rwanda Emergency Office (UNREO), which is coordinating U.N. operations in the central African country, said the report lacked evidence and was based on rumours.

"The UNHCR report gave no physical or forensic evidence of its claims. You cannot make allegations based on interviews with around 300 people," an UNREO spokeswoman in the capital Kigali said.

"We certainly want to support this government, not undermine it with uninvestigated rumours... these are sensitive allegations made without proof," she said.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said in a report issued in Geneva Friday that a consultant it hired had found a "consistent pattern" showing that Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) soldiers, who are mostly Tutsis, had harassed, intimidated and killed members of the majority Hutu tribe.

The RPF came to power in July after a three-month civil war during which an estimated one million Tutsis were massacred by the Hutu-dominated government army and militia.

The UNHCR office in Kigali has so far declined to comment on the controversial report which could seriously damage the new government's attempts to encourage the return of some two million Hutu refugees outside its borders.

Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu Friday rejected the UNHCR report as untrue and said it did not appear to be balanced. A government spokesman accused UNHCR of dishonesty.

Rwandan officials have previously admitted their soldiers have carried out isolated acts of reprisals against returning Hutu refugees suspected of involvement in the earlier massacres.



A Japanese soldier stands guard at Goma Airport. Japanese troops aborted their first independent mission to help Rwandan refugees as violence flared in the Zairean border town of Goma (AFP photo)

cause of the propaganda war the two sides are waging.

RPF officials said acts of intimidation and atrocities were being committed by the extremist Hutu Interahamwe militia which wants to keep an army of refugees in exile.

There are still only four U.N. human rights monitors in Kigali and they lack transport and resources to investigate the reported atrocities. The U.N. says 26 more monitors will arrive by the end of this month.

The UNHCR insisted Sunday it had good evidence of revenge killings by Tutsis of Hutus in different areas of Rwanda, including a sighting of fresh bodies near Kigali Friday.

"We have detailed and credible reports of killings from different parts of Rwanda, and we have shared these with other U.N. agencies and the government in Kigali at the very highest level," spokeswoman Sylvana Foa told Reuters.

"For example, in the Kigali region Friday our people went to look at an unused brick factory which we hoped to clean up and use as a reception centre for returning refugees."

"The doors opened and our team saw bodies inside. They seemed to be fresh. But then some soldiers came up and started screaming that our people shouldn't be there and chased them away."

Meanwhile, Japanese troops aborted their first independent mission to help Rwandan refugees in Goma Sunday as violence flared in the Zairean border town.

At least three people were killed as Zairean soldiers looted local civilians, UNHCR security officer Albert Kuiper told AFP as he kept watch over violent demonstrations on the road to the airport where the Japanese are based.

A UNHCR spokeswoman had earlier told reporters at a daily briefing that seven people had been killed in the violence.

Mr. Kuiper said a Zairean soldier tried to steal from a schoolboy and flung a grenade after him as he ran into his house.

The boy and a girl were killed, Mr. Kuiper said, and the soldier was then beaten to

Angola dampens hope for early accord with rebels

LUANDA (Agencies) — Angola's government has dampened hopes that it is close to reaching an accord with UNITA rebels on ending a long civil war, a state daily said Sunday.

Journal De Angola quoted Prime Minister Marcelino Moco and a senior negotiator as saying there were still obstacles impeding an immediate conclusion of peace talks in Zambia.

Neither Mr. Moco nor General Higinio Carneiro, head of the government negotiating team at the Lusaka peace talks with UNITA, could say whether a deal would be signed this month in line with a U.N. Security Council deadline.

There are some obstacles still blocking a ceasefire agreement, Mr. Moco told Journal De Angola.

Gen. Carneiro was quoted by the same newspaper as saying: "It is difficult to say categorically there will be an agreement by the end of the month."

An editorial by the daily also held out little hope for an accord this month — a prospect raised by delegates last week.

left the Zambian capital Friday for consultations with their leaders.

Sources close to the talks said the trips to Luanda and Huambo by government and rebel delegations were a clear indication that an accord would be signed this month to end two decades of civil war.

U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali requested the government and UNITA to complete peace talks by Sept. 30.

The Lusaka talks have dragged on for 10 months. African and Western diplomats said U.N. mediator Alioune Blondin Beye was expected to hand his report to Dr. Ghali by Sept. 25.

However a political analyst in Luanda who declined to be identified said UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi would sign anything put before him but an agreement would not be easily implemented.

"The implementation of a deal means Savimbi is finished. He could not live in Angola in peace now. He has affected too many people's lives, he has reason to feel afraid," he said.

Diplomats said it would also be difficult to disarm the warring factions after an accord had been signed.

"It will be difficult to get either side to disarm this time," one diplomat said.

to be named said talks progressed smoothly in the past two weeks after the capitulation of UNITA rebels over the governorship of Huambo province and the reported offer of the post of vice-president to Mr. Savimbi.

UNITA, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, has been fighting the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola since independence from Portugal in 1975.

Meanwhile, South Africa believes that hundreds of its former soldiers may be fighting under the Angolan flag and helping prolong that nation's civil war. Pretoria's embassy said Saturday.

"500 well-trained specialists of the ex-SADF (South-African Defence Forces)" have reportedly been hired as mercenaries by the Angolan army, said a South African embassy document made available to the Associated Press.

According to the document, demobilised soldiers have been recruited by a South African paramilitary operation, "Executive Outcome", to provide "security services" to the Luanda government since 1992.

It is the first time Pretoria has lent substance to persistent rumours that its soldiers were defying a United Nations ban and fighting for hire

government against the rebels.

It was not certain the South Africans had entered combat, but their government was undertaking a "rigorous investigation" of their involvement in Angola, early at the instigation of the soldiers' families, the document said.

The rebels said they killed six South Africans last week during an unsuccessful offensive by government forces.

According to a UNITA communiqué received by the Associated Press in Lisbon, Portugal, government troops were repelled and the South Africans killed when they tried to push into the northern diamond region of Kafunfo.

The presence of a renegade South African fighting force in Angola could possibly end President Nelson Mandela's intervention as a negotiator in Africa's bloodiest civil war.

The South African leader has already conferred with his Angolan counterpart, Jose Eduardo Dos Santos, and a Johannesburg meeting is pending with Mr. Savimbi.

But the rebels, who for months have accused South Africa of backing the government with arms and men, could use the mercenaries to question Mr. Mandela's neut-

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Divisions at crossing point

THE FAILURE of the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's encounter with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin Sunday to resolve the standoff between them about when and how to hold the Palestinian national election was no surprise, given their widening perspective on the issue and other related matters. There is little doubt that Mr. Rabin has been foot-dragging on the election issue by professing concern about the authority of the envisaged 100-member Palestinian council. Israel sees the projected council as some sort of executive body with no legislative powers for fear that legislative prerogatives would lead to sovereignty rights, something which is anathema to its long-term vision for the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The Palestinian National Authority (PNA), on the other hand, insists on a council with both legislative and executive powers.

While this difference between the two sides appears to be what is keeping Mr. Rabin from agreeing to an early Palestinian election slated for Nov. 1 by the PNA, the real reason for the current tug of war between the two sides is the issue of redeployment of Israeli troops stationed in the Palestinian territories. Israeli military leaders obviously seek to put off Israeli military withdrawal from Palestinian lands for fear that such a withdrawal would precipitate a threat to the security of Jewish settlers.

Postponing the discussions on vexing and controversial subjects such as Jerusalem and Jewish settlements under the PLO-Israeli accord of last year may have been the easy way out when that agreement was struck between them in Oslo in 1993 and now the time has come to face the fact that there is no escape from looking these issues straight in the eye.

A big fault in the PLO-Israeli peace talks that culminated in last September's accord lies essentially in the tactic of putting on hold the fundamental issues dividing them till a later date. For it would have been infinitely wiser to have dealt with such subjects in great details instead of leaving them till the bitter end only to find out that disagreement on them could unravel everything that was painstakingly achieved.

The lessons of Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations vindicate the Jordanian mode of conducting negotiations with Israel. Unlike the PLO, the Kingdom has insisted that every aspect and dimension of their peace talk be meticulously aired and ironed out right at the outset. The PLO-Israeli style of conducting their peace talks centred on carrying out the negotiations in phases with every phase threatening to undermine the earlier stage altogether. There is every reason to be concerned about the future conduct of the Palestinian-Israeli peace parleys as long as difficult topics are simply brushed under the carpet till a future date instead of dealing with them head on as early as possible.

We, nevertheless, hope that full agreement between Mr. Arafat and Mr. Rabin could be hammered out in due course on each and every thorny subject that still divide them. Mr. Rabin must face up to the inevitable by adjusting sooner than later to the need to withdraw his forces from the principal Palestinian cities and centres of population as a necessary prelude to holding free Palestinian elections. The Palestinian track can never be completely explored without the Palestinian people enjoying free elections. The mutual interests of the Palestinians as well as the Israelis lie squarely in a Palestinian democratic process based first and foremost on freedom and democracy for all peoples.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE UNITED STATES has not kept its promise of helping the Middle East region attain comprehensive development but has rather remained committed to ensuring Israel's military and economic superiority over the Arab states, said Al Rai daily Sunday. Washington has been peddling peace with Israel and promising comprehensive development to the countries of the region but it has failed to date to keep its promises and instead has been pursuing the same traditional policy of supporting Israel's practices and its occupation of Arab lands, said the daily. By pursuing a policy of backing the Jewish state's ambitious plans at the expense of the Arab states in time of peace and peace negotiations, the United States is endangering the whole peace process, and by supporting Israel's nuclear and armament policies, Washington is inviting new arms race this volatile region, added the daily. Throughout the years of conflict between the Arabs and Israel, Washington has made no secret of its backing for the Jewish state's military and economic might, enabling it to occupy Arab lands, the paper said.

SAWT AL Shaab daily criticised the U.N. Security Council for reducing the sanctions on Serbia as a reward for the aggressors who maintain their attacks on the Bosnian people. This biased policy contradicts the U.N. charter and international principles and is no doubt bound to consecrate injustice against the victims of the world whose human rights are being violated, said the paper. The U.N. council's decision was based on promises by Serbia not to launch attacks on Bosnia but these promises could easily be broken.

The daily, adding that there was poor control over the borders and anything could happen. Easing the sanctions on the aggressors came at a time when the Serbian leaders continue to show total disregard for the calls of the world community for halting attacks on the Muslim people of Bosnia and therefore, said the daily, such move can by no means help the cause of peace.

Human Rights File

Time to introduce unleaded gasoline

By Waleed Sadi

JORDAN HAS a solid reputation as a champion of environment protection which is a basic human right related to the right to life. Both His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan have time and again confirmed Jordan's commitment to safeguarding the Earth's eco-system from wanton human interferences. One Jordanian delegation after the other attending international conferences on environment or environment related subjects have also voiced the Kingdom's unequivocal support to all international and regional efforts to promote a healthy environment for all mankind.

Against this backdrop, is it not strange that the Kingdom has yet to introduce unleaded gasoline to its people? Many of our neighbours including Israel, Egypt and Lebanon have already made the so called "green fuel" available to their motorists. Lebanon had barely emerged from a disastrous civil war that lasted for 15 years when it moved to catch up with the new international standards on environment-friendly gasoline.

Our authorities have yet to respond to the call for similar policy on clean fuel in spite of the overwhelming evidence that lead is harmful to health. Of course, no one would expect to change the country's fuel supply completely and overnight to green gasoline because that would be impractical given the number of cars that depend on leaded gasoline. But what we can and should expect is a gradual phasing out of leaded gasoline and the concurrent gradual introduction of unleaded one over a span of years that should not last over a decade-and-a-half.

Two arguments are usually put forth by our concerned people for not moving ahead at the time being with the new spirit of the day. One is the proposition that unless and

until there is a demand for unleaded gasoline there can be no justification to make it available in the market. This argument sounds like the egg and chicken story. How can we expect to have even a minimal demand for unleaded gas until it is made available in the market? All newly-manufactured cars are normally equipped with catalysers which means that unleaded gas should be used. This system is taken out of cars shipped to the Jordanian market because the unleaded gas is not yet available. This state of affairs means that there can never be a demand for unleaded fuel as long as new automobiles are stripped from catalysers.

I dare say that car manufacturers incur additional costs to modify their cars to suit the Jordanian and similar markets. The minute unleaded gas is made available all new cars would start arriving to the country with the necessary technology that aims to protect our environment. What adds insult to injury is the custom policy of this country which augments the custom duties on cars that arrive with a catalyser as if it is a luxury item. A more sane custom policy would decrease custom duties that car owners would have to pay when they bring their vehicles with a technology that aims to protect the environment of their country. As a matter of fact we have legislations in place that reward industries which introduce systems to lessen harm to environment by deducting the cost of such systems from their tax dues. So why not be consistent and stop penalising car owners who want to contribute to the battle for a safe and healthy environment in Jordan.

The second argument is that the cost of refining such a clean gas in the country would be very high. I do not doubt

this submission. It would cost the Jordanian refinery untold amount of money to start refining the unleaded brand. Given this valid proposition, it would be in order to import a certain amount of unleaded gasoline to fulfill the initial small demand on it till the demand for the green gasoline goes to such an extent that warrants its local refining. There is no escape from the fact that sooner or later we will have to refine unleaded gasoline or make it available. We all talk about what peace in the region would do to regional tourism. How can we remain part of this region's peace market if we lag so much behind in this sense, especially knowing only too well that European motorists would rely on the availability of unleaded fuel? Israel is shifting fast into total reliance on unleaded gasoline. As is the case in the West it is fast phasing out the leaded one. Egypt and Lebanon are also joining forces with this trend in making unleaded fuel the principal gasoline in the market. For how long can modern Jordan stay behind? Only Syria and Iraq have yet to make similar moves. Even when we talk about costs, the right to life and the right to clean environment are two basic human rights that the rest of mankind is moving fast and effectively to realise.

The price tag on achieving a healthy environment is never too high in the long run. The economic costs of unhealthy eco-system are formidable and no nation can afford to ignore them for too long. We, of all countries which profess deep and unshaken commitment to environment protection, should not lag so much behind in keeping abreast of contemporary standards on health-related issues. Instead we should strive to set an example to the other states of the Middle East.

By Conor Cruise O'Brien

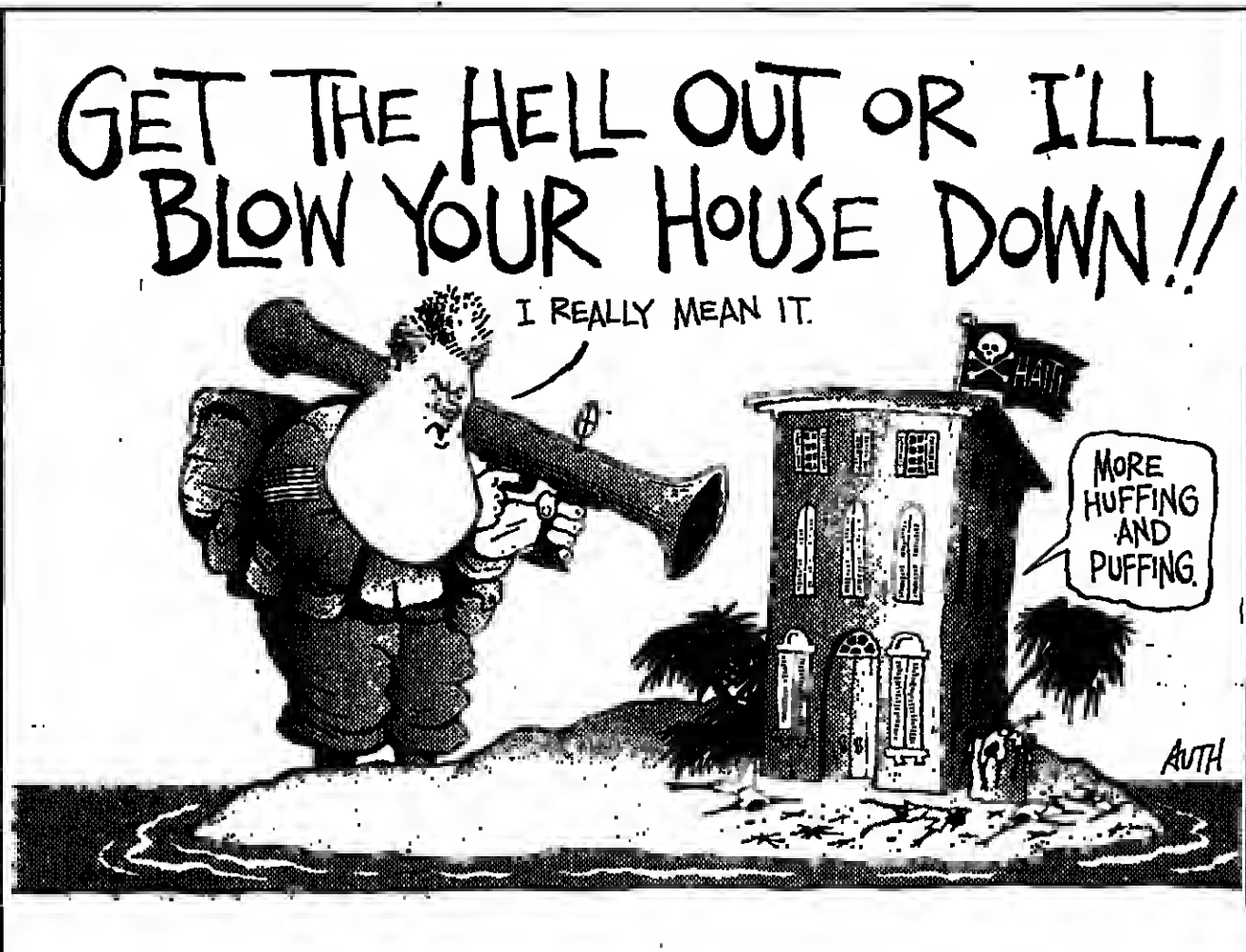
OPERATION Uphold Democracy would be more accurately entitled Operation Uphold the Democratic Party. At every stage, United States policy towards Haiti has been shaped by the perceived needs of the Democratic candidates in the congressional mid-term elections, now less than two months away.

What might help or hurt the people of Haiti was never there at any stage. All that mattered was what would help or hurt the Democratic candidates, and so help or hurt the image of President Bill Clinton and his future relations with Congress, which, in turn, are likely to determine whether or not Mr. Clinton will be elected president for a second term. With so much at stake at home, Haiti itself was of no importance at all. But Haiti as a campaign issue became of transcendent importance.

There have been several reasons for the rapid rise in the political fortunes of Haiti-the-issue. First, Americans had shown a lot more interest in Bosnia than in any other foreign-policy issue. That was a good reason to change the subject — to move it away from Bosnia. Over Bosnia, the president was being plausibly depicted as a petulant, dithering wimp, and that was hurting the Democratic congressional candidates. On the other hand, if Mr. Clinton stopped being a wimp and sent American boys into Bosnia, there was a strong chance that some of those would be coming back in body-bags, before Nov. 8, and that would hurt the Democratic candidates even worse than the idea of Mr. Clinton being a wimp.

There was indeed one idea which, had it been internationally practicable, would have made Bosnia a winner for the Democrats in the congressional election campaign. This was an idea put forward by an influential Washington think-tank, headed by a former Air Force chief of staff, General Michael J. Dugan.

The Dugan plan was for a massive allied offensive against the Serbian aggressors. Not only was all of Bosnia to be liberated, but Serbia was to be occupied, in order to ensure that there was no repetition of



Haiti-the-idea out of control

the aggression. In the Dugan plan, the offensive in the air was entrusted to the Americans. The ground troops were to be supplied by the European allies, primarily Britain, France and Italy. Unfortunately, the European allies failed to see the advantages of the role assigned to them in the Dugan Grand Design. The designated and indispensable ground troops would do nothing but drag their feet.

So the Dugan option faded, and with it the Bosnian issue as a possible winner for Democratic candidates in the congressional elections. At this point, Haiti-the-issue began to move up the electoral agenda. The idea, as often with the Democrats, was to take a leaf out of the book of trick of that old political conjuror Ronald Reagan.

When Mr. Reagan had found it expedient to cut and run from Lebanon, he won political compensation for that ignominious retreat by invading Grenada, a tiny Caribbean country that posed no threat whatever to the security of the Un-

ited States. This made it the ideal candidate for a casualty-free invasion, on the ground that it did pose a threat to the security of the United States.

Haiti is like Grenada in that it is a small, poor country in America's backyard. The "backyard" factor is what makes Haiti not like Lebanon, and not like Bosnia. Also, Haiti's military leaders had made themselves conspicuously obnoxious to the guardians of democratic principle in the hemisphere by chasing their elected president out of the country, instead of just hemming him in and running him, as is standard in the region and in other poor countries. So Haiti became the designated candidate for invasion/liberation, as Grenada had once been.

Yet things have not gone altogether as smoothly over Haiti as they did for Mr. Reagan with Grenada. For one thing, Haiti is quite populous, while Grenada had the conspicuous merit, for its destined role in world history, of having almost no population at all.

Another difference is that whereas Mr. Reagan just went in and proclaimed victory, Mr. Clinton did not, and does not, have the confidence in his authority over public opinion which enables a president to act like that. Mr. Clinton felt the need to prepare public opinion for a possible invasion of Haiti, by a propaganda campaign full of denunciations of the infamous Haitian regime, and full of compassion for the suffering people of Haiti.

Whereas large numbers of the said suffering people set out in boats for the land that was said to be brimming with compassion for them. At this point, the arrival in Florida, that populous and politically crucial state, of real flesh-and-blood Haitians from actual geographical Haiti was beginning to muck up Haiti-the-campaign-issue on which the White House was counting for a perceived foreign policy success.

Mr. Clinton therefore ordered the coastguard service to force Haitian boat people back to Haiti. No

matter that these acts were compelling suffering people to endure again what Mr. Clinton himself had described as the cruel control of an infamous regime. The point was that real-life Haiti must not be allowed to confuse Haiti-the-issue.

Yet the confusion was not easy to eradicate. The black political establishment, headed by the Black Caucus in Congress, did not like the spectacle of black people being pushed around by armed forces of the United States. Not that the Black Caucus wanted the Haitian refugees to be admitted to the United States. American blacks are no kinder than other Americans to welcome a large influx of poor blacks speaking a foreign language (like the Puerto Ricans, between whom and English-speaking blacks there is no love lost). "Don't let them in but stop them leaving" was the message from blacks and other Americans. So the political signals pointed towards military intervention.

But a politically successful military intervention

would have to be casualty-free, which could be ensured only through an advance deal with the infamous regime. The deal was duly done, and consummated this week.

The consummation became a bit messy when forces loyal to the infamous regime with which the deal was done beat up supporters of President Aristide, whom the Americans are coming (in theory) to restore. But that was transitional. When the Americans have been there for a while, ground rules of decorum will be established.

Already, the choreography is being prepared for the triumphant return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to Port-au-Prince. It will be a pageant of the triumph of Operation Uphold Democracy. Thousands of cheering Haitians will line the streets, watched by benevolent and disciplined police.

Vive President Aristide! Vive la Démocratie! Vive l'Amérique! Amplely recorded for television in late October, those sights and sounds ought to do wonders for the Democratic candidates come Nov. 8.

But this edifying scene will require the compliance of the military oligarchy; otherwise the police will not be available in their indispensable role as benevolent onlookers. The oligarchy and the Haitian middle class — both of which detest Mr. Aristide — will have to be reassured that Mr. Aristide's restoration is no more than a pageant for the cameras. Real power in Haiti will be shared between the oligarchy and the Americans, as long as the Americans are there.

After the Americans are gone, all power will revert to the oligarchy, behind whatever facades — such as a U.N. presence — are convenient both to themselves and the Americans. By then, the American elections will be over and Haiti will revert to being a non-issue. Except that the oligarchy will be required to prevent Haitians from leaving for America.

The author of the Comedians would have loved Operation Uphold Democracy. Graham Greene, thou shouldst be living at this hour! Haiti hath need of thee!

The Independent

Major is singing that old 1959 song

By Roy Denman

BRUSSELS — When the Maastricht treaty was finally ratified, European leaders thought with some relief, not least on the part of the British, that they had put off any further debate on the future of Europe until the inter-governmental conference scheduled for 1996.

But now the cat is out of the bag. Prime Minister Edouard Balladur of France and the German Chancellor Helmut Kohl have floated the idea, whispered about in Brussels for some time, of an inner group of France, Germany and the BENELUX countries going ahead on their own with economic and monetary union. The debate ab-

out the future shape of Europe has been relit.

So a much-heralded speech by Prime Minister John Major of Britain, on Sept. 7 in Leiden, Netherlands, was awaited with interest. It was a disappointment. The speech addressed the past, denied the present and refused to look to the future.

"There is not, and should never be, an exclusive hard core of countries or of policies," Mr. Major said. He described the early vision of Europe as right for its time, but outdated for the 1990s. And he attacked the European Parliament as nurturing a flawed ambition to become the democratic focus of Europe.

It is rare to find so many

illusions woven so deftly together in a single speech by a head of government.

The vision of the founding fathers is not outdated. It is coming true. Walter Hallstein, the first president of the European Commission, spoke of the Community as a three-stage process: customs union, economic union, political union. With the realisation of the single market, the union of first stage has been achieved. The cost and uncertainty of separate, fluctuating currencies will not long be tolerated by business or citizens. But a single currency means a single economic policy. This cannot be controlled by non-elected bureaucrats. There

will need to be a directly elected executive. That will mean the beginning of a federation, necessarily with its own foreign and defence policy.

Proposals for an inner core do not exclude Britain, or any other country. They simply recognise the fact that not all members of the union are at this stage willing or able to pay the price — in terms of economic and political commitment — for membership in an economic and monetary union. Those who decline to pay this price are excluding themselves.

Yet there remains a typically British conviction that nothing in Europe can happen without British permis-

sion. This view was best put by an ambassador I once worked for in Bonn. The year was 1959. I rashly suggested to him that Britain might one day join the recently formed Common Market. He exploded with indignation: "Her Majesty's government," he thundered, "could never associate itself with this Continental ragtag and bobtail. But it was damned impertinent of them to think of going to on their own."

That was British policy in 1959. It still seems to be British policy in 1994.

Does Mr. Major really think that in these circumstances Britain — with no voice in the economic, political or defence deci-

sions of the new European superpower — would continue to rate membership in the Group of Seven or permanent membership in the U.N. Security Council?

To attack the European Parliament as "nurturing a flawed ambition to become the democratic focus of Europe" is tantamount to contesting the British Parliament's right to oversee Scottish affairs on the grounds that it is a long way from Scotland.

What Britain needs is a prime minister who has done his homework and has fewer illusions about Europe. Perhaps the general elections, now likely in little more than 18 months, will provide one — *International Herald Tribune*.

Opponents of Burmese regime cautious over talks

By Tony Austin
Reuters

NGKOK — Opponents of Burma's military government cautiously welcomed the first direct meeting for years between the junta and opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi in Rangoon on Tuesday.

At the head of a jungle-d government-in-exile, she led the talks and called Burma's ruling State and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) to "step up with action, while we cautioned it could be a laborious bluff."

"We have said right from the start that the way to Burma's problems is through dialogue, not with force," she said.

Sein Win, leader of the SLORC, told Reuters.

Sein Win, who has refused a Thai entry and cannot rejoin combat on the Thai-Burmese border, was speaking by telephone from Maryland, U.S.

"Since this is the first time we should not set conditions, but they should give Aung San Suu access to the media," he said.

Burma state television showed pictures of the meeting which it said had taken place in a cordial atmosphere at an army house in Rangoon on Tuesday.

It was the first time Ms. Kyi, daughter of Burmese independence hero Aung San, had been allowed to leave the house of her late father.

In Rangoon where she has been under house arrest since July 1989, for attempting to end the military rule.

Television and radio news details about the meeting, nor did they show long it had lasted.

Television viewers saw pictures of a smiling Aung San Suu Kyi talking to generals across a decorated with flowers.

Protests in the Burmese capital could not immediately be reached for comment on the meeting.

Sein Win's government-in-exile, said it was too early to judge whether Tuesday's meeting was a breakthrough.

The parallel government was formed in late 1990 by members of Ms. Suu Kyi's political party who won seats in a landslide election victory earlier that year which the SLORC ignored.

"If there is genuine political dialogue it is good, but if they just talked about the weather it would be no use," he told Reuters.

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prise, Dr. Sein Win said: "We heard that it was about to happen, before or after the United Nations General Assembly."

Aye Saung, information secretary of the Democratic Alliance of Burma, an umbrella organisation of guerrilla groups fighting the junta, suggested the SLORC would make political capital out of the meeting.

"We know nothing about what they discussed but of course the SLORC will get benefit from this, by showing the international community this goodwill," he told Reuters by telephone from the Thai-Burmese border.

In a rare departure from its isolation, Burma was invited to attend ministerial talks of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations as the guest of host nation Thailand in July.

Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai, echoing earlier calls by international leaders, used the occasion to urge Rangoon's Foreign Minister Ohn Gyaw to set free Ms. Suu Kyi as the key to solving the rest of his country's problems.

"It was perhaps a one-sided meeting," Aye Saung said of Tuesday's talks. "She had no one there to support her or to oversee the meeting. It would be more fair if she was allowed to meet with her supporters and the press," Aye Saung said.

"We are worried that she might be tricked or pressured in some way," he added.

A Thai-based Burmese exile, who asked not to be identified, said: "We think it's a bit of a bluff to reduce complaints by the international community in the run-up to the United Nations General Assembly."

Burma is regularly condemned at the General Assembly for alleged abuses, said by human rights groups to include detention without trial, torture, deaths of detainees, suppression of ethnic minorities and forced labour.

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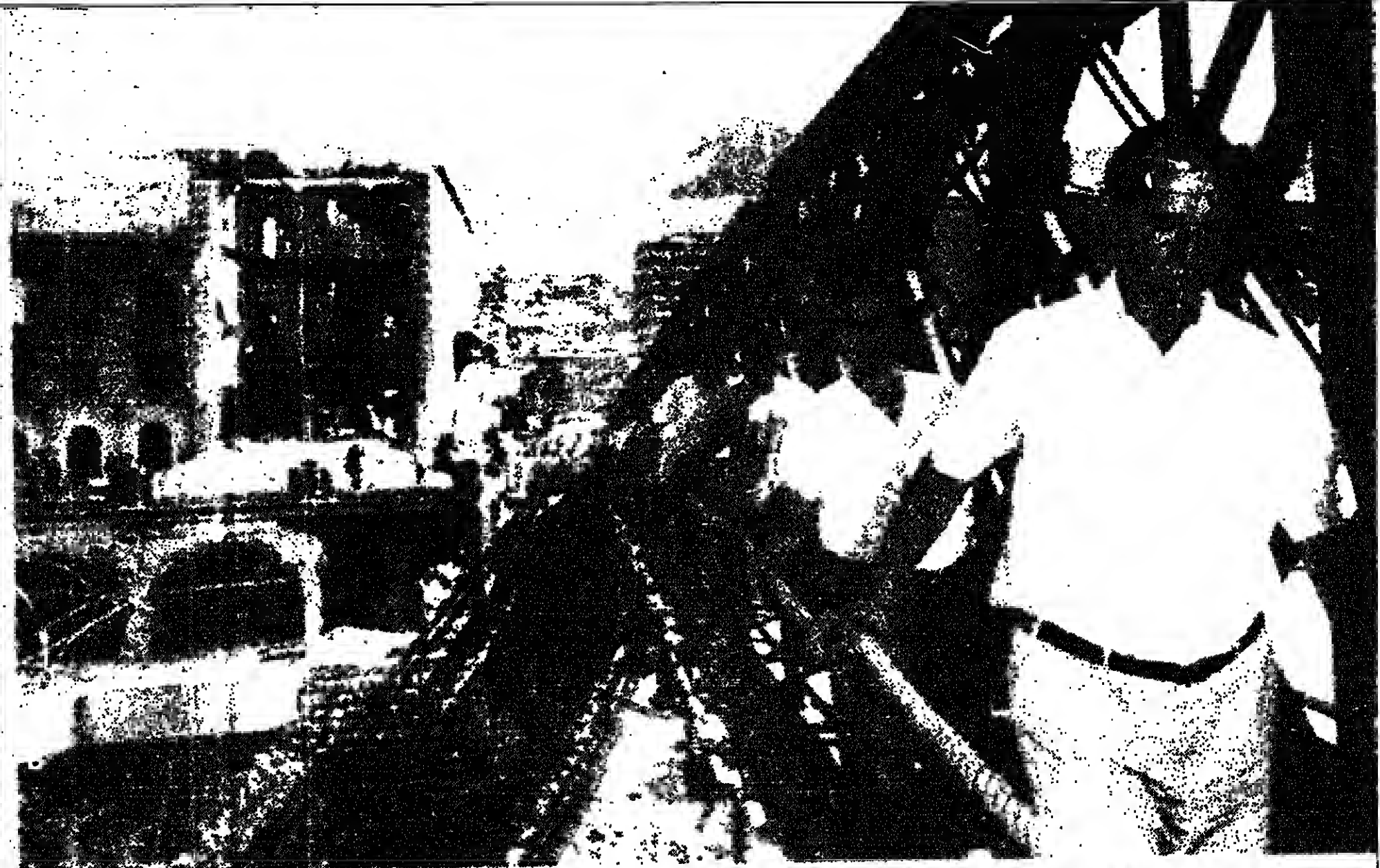
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Mostar residents cross the newly opened Bailey Bridge which recently was built by British and Spanish engineers to replace the old Tito bridge of the Herzegovinian capital (AFP photo)

Fears rise for Sarajevo as Serbs tighten grip

By Jacques Charmelot
Agence France Presse

SARAJEVO — Fears are growing for the people of Sarajevo as the besieging Bosnian Serbs tighten their grip on the city and temperatures start falling with the approach of winter.

Not since the civil war began 29 months ago has the Bosnian capital been deprived of water, gas and electricity for as long as now (nine days by Friday) and basic foods have disappeared from stores or doubled in price.

"The situation is extremely bad, the worst since the beginning of the war," said U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees spokesman Kris Janowski. "When

we get real cold weather it is going to be an extremely difficult situation."

The Bosnian Serbs, piqued at the decision of the Serbian government in Belgrade to cut off supplies in retaliation for their refusal to accept an international peace plan, have stepped up their pressure.

Officials of the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) are publicly voicing confidence that negotiations to get the services restored will succeed eventually, but privately they point out that the Serbs have no reason to be magnanimous.

On Friday the U.N. Security Council voted to tighten its sanctions against the Bosnian Serbs, while easing those imposed

against Belgrade.

The main effect of the power cut has been to stop the main pumping station at Bacevo, which supplies the city with 80 per cent of its water. Sarajevans now spend much of their time gathered round standpipes, then staggering home bowed under the weight of containers or pushing wheelbarrows laden with jerrycans.

Sefka, 53, has to walk four kilometres from her home to the hewery district where a diesel-driven pump brings water up from an underground well.

When the water was cut off, she said she felt overcome by despair. "The only thing I wanted to do was sit and cry... but I do what I have to, because there is no

choice."

Industry has virtually come to a halt without electricity or gas to power emergency generators. "We have produced no bread for a week," said the head of the municipal bakery, Kemal Mesak.

The city's hospitals cook food for the patients on wood-burning stoves, and only start up the diesel generators for emergency operations.

"What has saved us in not having to treat war casualties," said Kosovo hospital official, referring to the U.N. and NATO imposed ban on heavy weapons within a 20 kilometres exclusion zone.

NATO aircraft Thursday attacked a Serb tank which

was in the zone, after first halting the aid airlift into the city. Flights should resume Saturday, Janowski said, but food prices have been reflecting the current tension for some time.

The government set a price ceiling on essential foods, which promptly disappeared from the shelves. Bread, milk, sugar and powdered milk are not to be found. Cooking oil, rice and salt can be had but at double the fixed price, while 30 eggs cost 12 German marks four times the average monthly salary.

A U.N. civilian staffer, speaking anonymously, pointed out that the Serbs could easily stop the airlift by firing at the cargo

planes, and cut off the supply of black market food entering the city through the tunnel under the airport.

"It would turn Sarajevo into an immense refugee camp and put the inhabitants back in the stone age," he said.

The U.N. employee also pointed out that President Alija Izetbegovic's position is under threat, with members of his government accusing him of not seeing what was coming.

Morale meanwhile has slumped. The tightening of the siege "has taken away some dignity from the people," Janowski said. "They are back to the humiliating routine of sitting in the dark with nothing to do."

NATO doubts persist on U.N. strategy on Bosnia

By Angus MacKinnon
Agence France Presse

BRUSSELS — Thursday's strike by three NATO warplanes on a Serb tank has relaxed but not eliminated tensions between the alliance and the United Nations over Bosnia-Herzegovina, NATO sources indicated Thursday.

The strike, carried out in retaliation for Serb attacks on French U.N. peacekeepers, was met with a "feeling of relief" in Brussels, where officials of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation have spent weeks trying to push the United Nations into a tougher line with the Serbs.

"This was something that was long overdue. We are glad NATO has been able to apply what it sees as its role in moving towards a settlement in Bosnia," one source said.

But others indicated the destruction of an unmanned tank would do little to

remove concerns that the U.N. Protection Force is allowing the Serbs to get away with too much, notably in breaches of the 20 kilometre heavy arms exclusion zone around Sarajevo.

"It was at least a demonstration of firmness but there are still a lot of grey areas to be cleared up," one diplomat said. But he added: "We are not clear as to why this target was chosen."

A NATO source was even more categorical in insisting that NATO scepticism remains about the U.N. attitude to Serb violations of the exclusion zone around the besieged capital.

"The U.N.'s big mistake was to allow heavy arms into the exclusion zone without reacting. We can't say we are happy with this situation and we can only see it leading to further problems and further provocations," the source said.

Diplomatic sources in

Paris said they believed Thursday's strike was designed to put extra pressure on the Bosnian Serbs to accept an international peace plan already massively rejected in a referendum.

The sources said the NATO action was all the more necessary now that Bosnian Serb leaders appeared to have opted to defend by going on the attack, a strategy underscored since the apparent loss of support for Bosnia's Serbs from Belgrade.

Since the rump Yugoslavia — Serbia and Montenegro — cut its links with its former allies, the Bosnian Serbs have, as well as redeploying heavy arms in the exclusion zone outside Sarajevo, disrupted the airlift to the beleaguered city. They have relaunched hostilities around the north-western Muslim enclave of Bihac, and ethnic cleansing has also reappeared in the north.

U.S. President Bill Clinton, under pressure from Congress, has meanwhile fixed Oct. 15 as the date by which the Bosnian Serbs must accept the peace plan, or face the removal of the arms embargo to favour Bosnian government forces, which are mainly Muslim.

The target of Thursday's strike had been included on a list of heavy arms the Serbs had begun to pull out of the exclusion zone, but it was one of 15 direct attacks on U.N. troops which prompted U.N. Sarajevo sector commander General Andre Souhrouf to ask for NATO retaliation.

A U.N. spokesman denied things would have been different if Lieutenant General Sir Michael Rose, the U.N. commander for Bosnia-Herzegovina, who has resisted NATO pressure for a sharper response to Serb violations, had not been out of Bosnia.

"General Rose had de-

manded all the warring parties stop their aggressions and refrain from escalating the conflict," the spokesman said.

But NATO sources doubt Thursday's strike will mark a turning point in the approach of U.N. forces on the ground.

"Whether we see more of the same depends what happens on the ground but I don't think this points to anything bigger or wider as far as NATO involvement goes," one source said.

Croatian Serbs meanwhile accused the Croatian army of violating a ceasefire accord reached last March, the Iskra news agency said in a report monitored in Belgrade.

According to sources close to commanders of the self-declared Serb Republic of Krajina, the Croats allowed 16 lorries and some 200 men inside the U.N.-created "separation zone" outside Turanj, near Karlo-

vac, southwest of Zagreb.

The ceasefire agreement foresees both sides deploying just 75 policemen in the region, home to thousands of refugees who fled to Croatia after inter-Muslim fighting near Bihac, which borders Croatia's Krajina region, held by Serbs.

In a separate development, Belgrade accused the United States and Muslim countries of foot-dragging over efforts to achieve a peace settlement, the Tanjug news agency reported.

Islamic states, backed by the United States, late Thursday prevented the U.N. Security Council from agreeing when a vote would be held on whether to relax sanctions on the rump Yugoslavia.

Tanjung said the "manoeuvre" would discredit peace moves by the international contact group and encourage supporters of the "military option."

Police unit heads for Haiti

(Continued from page 1)

President Bill Clinton ordered Jordan to send police units.

The unit off as boarded a U.S. military aircraft were also Royal Air Force personnel.

Chief, Sharif Zeid Shaker, Public Security Department Director Abdul Rahman Al M, Commander of the and Border Police

Sharif Fawwaz Zahen Abdullah, the Armed Forces inspector general and senior public security officer.

Jordan is among 20 countries which have agreed to field troops in the multinational peacekeeping force in Haiti.

Other countries include Israel, Poland and Bangladesh.

Libyan forces quit barracks

(Continued from page 1)

exchanged, and there were no deaths.

Col. Hartley said the unit was sent to the barracks to prevent a further incident.

A separate incident, the body of an Arabid sup was found Sunday in anytown of Cite Soleil, violent street protests took in which demonstrators called for the rapid of the exiled president.

Witnesses said violence in Cap-Haitien the rioting in Cite Soleil came as a reminder to United States that in Haiti was a riotous despite signs in days of deployment.

U.S. forces, dispatched under an agreement reached with Haiti's military junta last Sunday to avert a U.S. invasion of Haiti, are authorised to use their weapons when their safety is threatened and to avert abuses of authority by Haitian officials.

Some 1,800 Marines arrived in Cap-Haitien Tuesday and set up a base at the local airport. They were to have been relieved Saturday by reinforcements of the 10th

Senator Sam Nunn, the Georgia Democrat who travelled to Haiti last week with former President Jimmy Carter to negotiate the return of Mr. Aristide with the military leaders who ousted him from power three years ago.

Given the bad luck U.S. troops had in Somalia last year and a U.S. public not entirely convinced as to the necessity of U.S. intervention here, the firefight raised worries of another unpopular U.S. entanglement in the domestic affairs of a developing country.

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Kuwait activists want more human rights progress

By William MacLean
Reuters

KUWAIT — Kuwaitis could do more to address human rights issues in the emirate, activists say, but they add it can be hard work getting their message widely understood.

"I swear to God that the world will respect us more if we say 'this is wrong and we will correct it,'" Ahmad Al Khatib, a veteran opposition deputy, told parliament earlier this year.

"We are like ostriches. We hide our heads in the sand and think the world is not watching."

The state for which the world went to war has tripped up at times over human rights since the 1991 Gulf conflict despite marked progress including democratic reforms

tion of an outspoken parliamentary rights committee. The committee, of which Mr. Khatib is a member, investigates and publicises complaints by Kuwaitis and foreigners with an openness unheard of in other states on the Arabian Peninsula.

A U.S. embassy report on Kuwait human rights in 1993 says Kuwait made progress, relaxing residency restrictions on Palestinians from Gaza, making it easier for foreign workers to bring their families to live with them, agreeing to begin investigating the cases of long-term detainees and clamping down on illegal recruitment agencies for domestic servants.

But alleged extrajudicial killings in the aftermath of the Gulf war continue to haunt the emirate despite repeated government assurances it is investigating the

incidents.

A 1991 U.S. State Department report alleged that after U.S.-led forces ousted Iraq from Kuwait in February 1991 Kuwaitis committed more than 300 killings as they pursued foreigners suspected of collaborating.

Kuwait says any killings that took place happened in regrettable but understandable conditions of post-war chaos.

Incidents subsided after Kuwaiti leaders reassured control in May but prosecutions have been few, the 1993 report said.

A court in December, 1993 jailed a former interior ministry official for 15 years of murdering a Lebanese man and his son and trying to kill the man's daughter in March 1991. He remains the only official so far jailed for post-

The 1993 U.S. report said Iraqis, Jordanians, Palestinians, Yemenis and Sudanese (whose countries did not support the coalition war on Iraq) continued to be harassed and subject to arbitrary arrest by police.

It said it had reports of beatings of detainees in state security detention, although such reports were far fewer than in 1992. Officers found to have used electric shocks on a Kuwaiti detainee were sacked and the man compensated, it said.

Kuwaiti officials strongly deny abuse of foreigners or detainees.

Embassies report maltreatment of Asian guest workers, but Kuwaitis insist expatriate employers are the main offenders.

Kuwait has won acclaim for reviving its assembly, enshrining the principle of free speech rare in the Gulf including criticism of its own human rights record. Some diplomats and analysts say it could do more.

"I cannot imagine if the Kuwaitis have really asked themselves if they believe, deep in their consciences, in human rights," wrote political scientist Ahmad Al Baghdadi.

"If the Kuwaiti believed in this ideal, his ideas and behaviour would change. He would become another human being."

Others differ. "Kuwaitis are conscious that the rights of all, Kuwaitis and non-Kuwaitis, should be respected. Where we differ is how to translate that into practice," said Abdul Redha Assiri, a colleague of Mr. Baghdadi's at Kuwait Uni-

versity.

"In any nation coming out of war it is a human reaction to do something against collaborators. But the situation has improved a lot. The image of Kuwait should be reviewed."

In August 1993 Kuwait restricted human rights monitoring by banning all unlicensed groups including those studying human rights, saying such groups had unspecified political motives.

The U.S.-based Middle East Watch Human Rights groups said the "closure puts an end to the pioneering work Kuwait human rights advocates have played in the (Gulf)."

Kuwaiti officials say the parliamentary human rights committee performs all necessary monitoring functions.

IMF and Egypt tussle over pound devaluation

CAIRO (AFP) — The Egyptian government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are at odds over demands to speed up reform and devalue the Egyptian pound.

President Hosni Mubarak said Friday: "The devaluation of the pound is not planned and is not being studied."

But the IMF insists that a too-strong pound will harm the country's exports, and believes that the currency is overvalued by 25-40 per cent, according to the economic review it released.

"The IMF believes that accrued inflation from the last three years and the lack of competitiveness of Egyptian exports justify devaluation," a Western economic expert said.

"Devaluation could be avoided if efforts were made to lower interest rates, boost exports, reform the financial system, speed up structural reform and keep to a strict wage policy," another economist said.

But restricting public salaries is a risky business in Egypt, already under the shadow of Islamic militant violence spurred on by economic and social inequality. Unemployment stands at 20 per cent, according to U.S. estimates.

Cairo and the IMF have been wrestling with a number of issues including devaluation in talks which began nine months ago and have not yet

reached a conclusion.

Their negotiations on the 1994-95 financial year are to continue early October alongside meetings of the World Bank and the IMF in Madrid.

In the meantime the IMF refused to give the go-ahead to Club of Paris creditors' plans to wipe out \$4 billion of Egypt's debt in June.

The sum, amounting to 20 per cent of Egypt's debt to its public creditors, was to be the last slice of a debt reduction promised after it signed an accord with the IMF in 1991.

But the IMF says Egypt has delayed an agreed programme of economic reforms.

Prime Minister Atef Sedki stressed this week that there was "no disagreement" between Egypt and the IMF and World Bank, while International Cooperation Minister Youssef Boutros-Ghali said the IMF would give the green light to debt reduction before the end of the year, according to reports in the unofficial press.

Egypt is in a difficult situation. After large-scale devaluation three years ago, its currency has enjoyed unprecedented stability at 3.3 pounds a dollar.

The central bank has around \$17 billion in reserves, inflation has fallen to nine per cent from more than 20 per cent in 1991, and growth stands at around two per cent.

But despite such encouraging

signs, the economy has not taken off. The most recent available figures, for the 1992-93 financial year, showed a \$5.3 billion surplus in Egypt's balance of payments but the figure is misleading.

"It represents the transfer of funds, not a trade surplus," an economist said.

Excluding such transfers and earnings sent back from 2.5 million Egyptians working abroad — attracted by high interest rates — Egypt's current accounts show an actual deficit of \$3.8 billion, according to a U.S. embassy report in June.

The report cites "the drop in tourism revenue and non-oil exports, and a rise in imports."

Meanwhile the trade deficit rose by 14 per cent to \$7.3 billion. "The absence of a significant rise in exports underlines the high rate of the pound... and the low rate of activity in the private sector," the report said.

A lower than \$2 billion a year, non-oil exports "are ridiculously weak for a country of 60 million inhabitants," an economist said.

But Egyptian economists fear devaluation would only lead to soaring inflation again because many products are imported, and damage the confidence of investors without offsetting on exports since cotton and oil, Egypt's principal exports, depend on world markets.

Cuba liberalises agricultural sales to fight black market

HAVANA (AFP) — Cuba has decided to allow farmers to sell part of their crops to fight a growing black market that has deepened food shortages in this Caribbean nation still struggling with the loss of its Soviet sponsor.

Havana hopes that efforts to ease food and potable water shortages and provide additional public transportation will slow Cuba's economic slide.

The embarrassing outflow of 31,000 boat people after an Aug. 5 riot in the capital helped spur the government into action.

Cuban Agricultural Minister Alfredo Jordán announced Wednesday that beginning Oct. 1, farmers who fulfilled their quota of state sales could take any excess and sell it legally at new farmers markets.

The shift should act as an "antidote to the black market and food theft," Mr. Jordán said Friday.

"Cuba's leaders" also hope that the move will encourage farmers to raise crops on idle farmland and eventually allow Cuba to produce enough food that the government can scrap the subsidies which create a huge budget gap.

Even on the black market, Cubans are often hard-pressed to find sufficient

quantities of fruits and vegetables.

Beef, hotseam, milk, coffee, tobacco, cocoa and rice are the only products excluded from the sales. They will remain rationed and sold at subsidised prices.

Prices at the farmers markets will be set by supply and demand.

But the success of the reform will depend on the elimination of food rationing now used in an attempt to spread the shortages around, said Mr. Jordán.

Another new incentive is that fuel and other agricultural inputs will be distributed to the most productive growers, and they will be permitted to acquire articles usually unavailable or only sold for scarce dollars.

Food shortages are especially bad in Havana, where 15 farmers markets are planned for the 2.3 million people living here, Cuba's population is 11 million.

The plans for farmers markets goes well beyond the "peasants markets" allowed from 1980-1986. President Fidel Castro, who took power in a 1959 revolution, cancelled them arguing that they only enriched the intermediaries who bought the products and then sold them in the cities.

veloping countries in East Asia and the Pacific, the bank said.

However, the region is home to nearly half the world's poor and is plagued by "widespread poverty and unacceptably low standards of living for many of its people," according to the report.

In fiscal 1994 the bank loaned \$2.37 billion to South Asia. This regional total made up 11.3 per cent of the bank's world-wide lending total of \$20.84 billion.

Lending to South Asia in fiscal 1994 decreased by \$1.046 billion and the bank said it has recently placed less emphasis on the growth of its

portfolio and more on its quality.

The bank attributed its decreased lending to greater care exercised by the bank and borrowers "to achieve a higher quality-at-entry for new projects."

It also cited the fact that several countries had built up reserves and improved their balance of payments status had made adjustment borrowing less necessary.

The bank said the region faces three major challenges:

- To deepen economic reform in order to achieve higher growth and greater economic resilience;
- To broaden and enhance poverty reduction efforts;
- To ensure environmental sustainability as economic development puts increasing pressure on air, water, and land resources.

The report cited tax reforms in India and Pakistan and continued fiscal stability in Bangladesh among examples of recent progress, as well as continued privatisation of public sector enterprises in Sri Lanka and Nepal.

"Signalling the confidence of international investors in South Asia's growth potential is the surge in capital flows to the region, particularly for

Sri Lanka and India," the bank said.

On the anti-poverty agenda, the bank said that although high and sustained economic growth is essential to reducing poverty, growth alone is not sufficient.

The bank emphasised "policies designed to expand output in agriculture and increase employment and earnings in the rural off-farm sector."

"Better access to services — particularly basic education, health, nutrition, and family planning — and more effective safety net programmes are essential," the bank also reported.

Private bank group urges IMF to spur lagging debtor nations

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A powerful global bank organisation wants the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to spur developing states and countries in transition to respect their loan repayments with private creditors.

Charles Dallara, managing director of the Institute of International Finance (IIF), has expressed concern with the IMF's continuing provision of funds to countries which have not shown good faith toward the private sector, a veiled reference to Russia.

Russia's private debt has climbed to some \$18 billion, including \$3 billion in interest in arrears, according to the IIF, which groups the world's leading private banks.

"We are concerned that the IMF continues to disburse resources to countries in the absence of a clear commitment by them to normalise relations with external creditors," Mr. Dallara wrote in a letter to IMF Interim Committee chairman Philippe Maystadt.

The IMF should return to its longstanding policy which prevailed until the mid-1980s, he said in a letter ahead of the IMF's annual meeting scheduled to open next Thursday in Madrid.

Exceptional circumstances that may have justified the eased policy "no longer exist," Mr. Dallara said.

Resuming the tougher policy would acknowledge "that domestic economic reform — no matter how effective — will generally not provide a basis for access to global capital markets unless accompanied by settlement of overdue obligations to external creditors," he said.

He cited Poland and Ecuador as recent examples of countries which managed their debt and experienced economic growth.

The IMF's role is essential if the multilateral institutions want to continue to grant special privileges on private financing in developing countries, he said.

Investment and credit flows to emerging countries — the most advanced de-

veloping countries — are expected to reach roughly \$150 billion in 1994, the IIF said.

While below the 1993 level of \$190 billion, these flows are not as low as would have been expected given rising U.S. interest rates.

In addition, Mr. Dallara said, "while emerging market economies' investment needs are growing, their domestic savings have not kept pace."

Mr. Dallara recommended that the IMF exercise a reinforced surveillance and coordination role on the policies of the Group of Seven.

He said that "a discreet (IMF) dialogue with the private financial community could bring systemic benefits."

U.S. manufacturers ask central bank to keep interest rates steady

NEW YORK (R) — The National Association of Manufacturers urged the federal reserve (Fed) not to raise interest rates again this year for fear it would endanger their prosperity and curtail the hiring of new workers, the New York Times reported in its Sunday edition.

The Times, citing a poll taken by association executives at a three-day meeting, said the association expressed opposition to higher rates just ahead of a Federal Reserve meeting to discuss the economy and whether another rate increase was needed.

The Times said the poll is part of the association's effort to prevent another rate increase that might slow the economy and dampen its members' sales.

"Federal Reserve policy-makers are to meet Tuesday to discuss the economy. Expectations on Wall Street of another rate increase — after five increases since early February — played a role in last week's de-

cline of more than 100 points in the Dow Jones industrial and forced market interest rates higher.

Results of the poll were released at a three-day meeting in Washington that was attended by 115 chief executives of large and small companies such as Boeing, the Detroit automakers and small machine shops in the Midwest.

The Times said that the executives rarely come out so bluntly against a rate increase. But this time, the executives said, higher interest rates would catch them just as their sales are expanding, mostly from the ripple effects of strong home construction and surging auto and truck sales.

But even executives of companies removed from the auto and construction industries expressed concern about rates, the newspaper said.

In taking this position shortly before a Federal Reserve meeting, the association challenged a basic tenet of the central bank's policy.

While most Fed officials feel rising inflation poses great danger to the economy and should be prevented even at the cost of an economic slowdown, the manufacturers take the opposite view. They even prefer a little inflation, which gives them a way to raise prices.

Lawrence Clarkson, vice president at jetliner manufacturer Boeing, told The Times that higher rates might discourage people from buying airline tickets on credit, just as air travel was rising and airlines might be ready to order new planes.

The manufacturers said that while the Fed's five rate increases this year have not been a problem, the next one could be. So they opposed any further action at this week's meeting or the next one in November.

The Times described the association as a leading Washington lobbyist, one that played a big role in persuading Congress to block President Clinton's health insurance proposals.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY SEPTEMBER 26, 1994
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: There are no aspects today and it isn't the time to cause ripples in human relations or to try to settle a pending argument that you would like to have resolved. Avoid those you know work against your interests.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This is a good day to gain the goodwill of those you want to be associated with in the future and gain their support for your advancement.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Be very precise in handling all of your duties today and you can easily add to your present income. Show affection for your loved ones.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Today is an ideal day to get into the recreations which you like the most and enjoy them in the company of good friends and relatives.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Doing something which will make your home more charming is wise today. Invite friends into your home and entertain them.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Pay compliments to friends who are doing good things and boost their morale. You gain their added good will as well.

VERGO: (August 22 to September 22) Plan how to make your home more charming and valuable at the same time. Take initial steps now to get as much completed as possible.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) You feel dynamic today and should contact those you want to impress and get the right results. Safeguard your reputation.

SCORPIO: (October 24 to November 21) Now you can garner the data you need from one who has been recalcitrant in so doing before this period of time.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) By doing something special for your loved ones and close friends, you make them happy and improve your social life in the process.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) An influential person can be of real assistance to you today if you contact him/her early in the day. Handle affairs wisely.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A clever individual can give you suggestions which will help you to make big headway in the future and allow you to be very successful.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Be more exacting in business deals and get far better results. Arrive on time for any appointments you make either business or personal.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

Peanuts



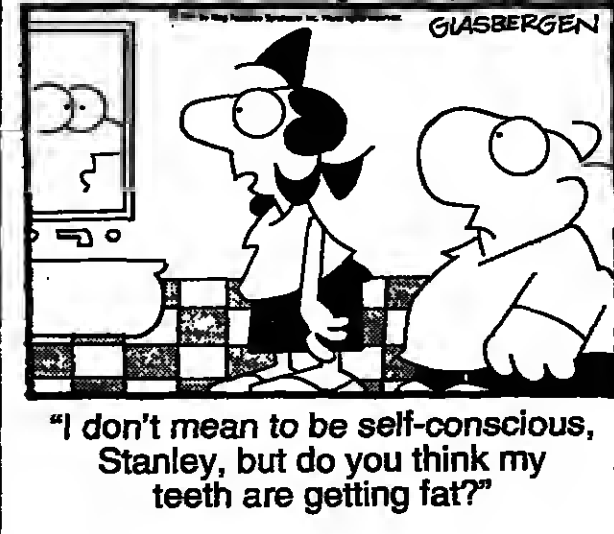
Andy Capp



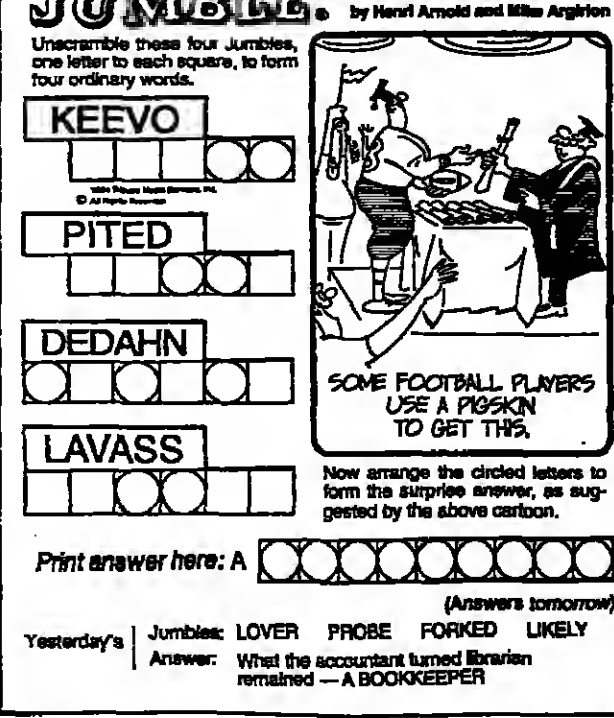
Mutt'n'Jeff



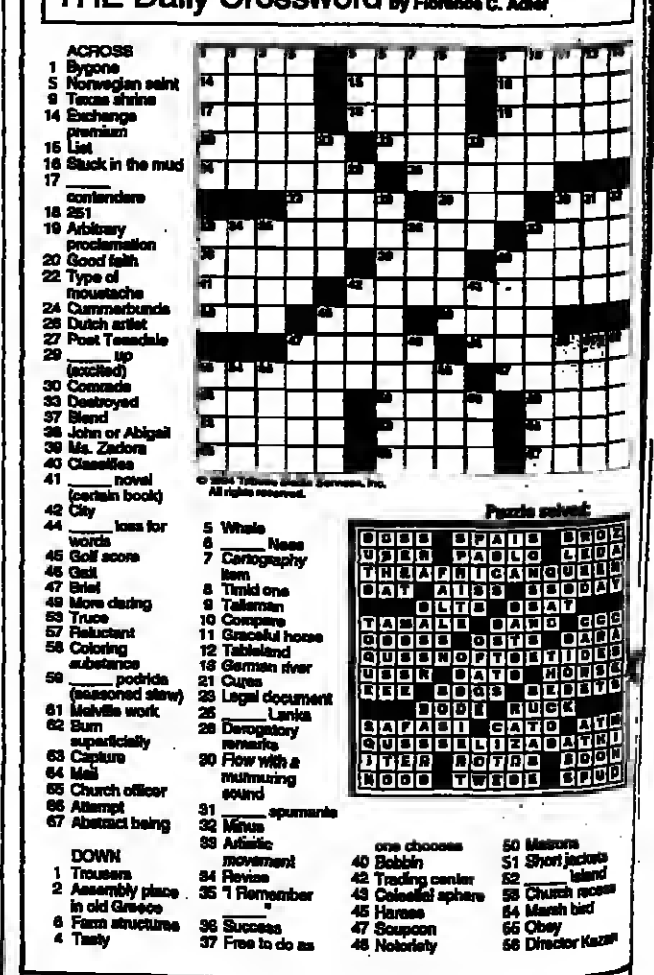
THE BETTER HALF



JUMBLE



THE Daily Crossword by Florence C. Adler



Sheikh Badr said Kuwait was making good profits from its investments abroad due to an improvement in foreign stocks, which account for a large part of overseas assets by Kuwait and other Gulf oil producers.

Hill wins Portuguese Grand Prix

ESTORIL, Portugal — Briton Damon Hill boosted his hopes of winning the world drivers championship Sunday by completing his third successive victory for Williams in convincing fashion at the Portuguese Grand Prix.

The 34-year-old Englishman came home just six-tenths of a second ahead of his teammate and fellow-Briton David Coulthard in a faultless demonstration of the Anglo-French team supremacy.

Hill's win boosted him to within one point of the suspended championship-leading German Michael Schumacher. Schumacher has 76 points and Hill 75 with three races remaining and Schumacher now free to return to action.

For Coulthard it was also

the perfect result in his final race this season for the Williams team.

It was Coulthard's first podium finish and he set a high standard against which Nigel Mansell will be measured when he replaces him for the final three Grand Prix.

Finland's Mika Hakkinen, in a McLaren, came home third, nearly 20 seconds adrift of the two Williams men but ahead of promising Brazilian Rubens Barrichello in a Jordan.

Jos Verstappen of the Netherlands finished fifth for Benetton to give Schumacher's recently-troubled team some consolation on a day when they were also past by Williams in the constructors championship. Williams now have 89 points to Benetton's

87. Briton Martin Brundle finished sixth in the second McLaren to endorse their progress in the second half of the season.

The win was Hill's fifth of the year and the eighth of his career in only his 31st grand prix, an impressive set of statistics.

Schumacher, who watched the race on television in Germany, has won nine of his 49 races since making his Formula One debut just over three years ago.

The race was dominated by Williams and was a disaster for Ferrari.

Austrian Gerhard Berger, starting from pole position, led for the first seven laps, but had to retire with a gearbox failure which left only

two cars in it.

Berger's Ferrari teammate Jean Alesi led for four laps during the first flurry of pit stops but was also forced out earlier than expected after a collision with Australian David Brabham's Simtek.

Coulthard always drove forcefully and appeared to be capable of winning himself had it not been for team orders and the need to support Hill's title challenge.

The 23-year-old Scot led after Berger's retirement for 10 laps and also for two after the pit stops, when Barrichello also led for three laps, but handed over the lead to Hill on lap 28.

From there to the finish he stayed on Hill's tail ensuring the two Williams men came home in close formation.



NEW CHAMP: Dutch boxer Regilio Tuur took his World Boxing Association heavy feathleaps for joy after beating Eugene Speed of the U.S. on points in Rotterdam late Saturday in

AS Roma take lead in Italy

ROME (AFP) — Eduardo Balbo shot AS Roma into provisional pole position at the top of the Italian championship Sunday.

Balbo, who fired home an 18th minute penalty and added another goal four minutes later, started off their 4-1 victory at lowly Reggina. Luigi de Agostini pulled one back, but Uruguayan Daniel Fonseca and Francesco Moriero both scored in the 63rd minute for Roma to kill off the match.

Goal differences saw AS Roma take the lead from Parma, who were due to play at Lazio late Sunday evening. Juventus managed to beat Sampdoria 1-0 through an Angelo di Livio goal, despite the absence of Portugal's Paulo Sousa and France's Didier Deschamps, both injured.

UEFA Cup champions Inter Milan, without suspended striker Danny Bergkamp, disposed of Fiorentina 3-1, with a double by Uruguay's Ruben Sosa. And another by Macedonian Darko Pancev. Argentina's Gabriel Batistuta replied for Fiorentina which keeps him at the top of the scoring chart with five league goals.

Ferrari mechanics' incident causes row

ESTORIL, Portugal (AFP) — Ferrari have launched a bitter attack on the rulers of Formula One, in the wake of being fined and threatened with a nine-race ban after an incident involving their mechanics.

The men, leaving the track Friday night after what Ferrari said was a 16-hour working day, found the door through which they had entered was shut.

Police, called to the scene later, alleged the mechanics kicked in the door and then threatened a policeman on duty. Reinforcements were called and the Ferrari men were questioned at a local police station.

As a result of the incident, Ferrari were given a \$50,000 fine Saturday and a suspended one-race ban, pending the team's behaviour over the final three races of the season.

Stewards of the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) imposed the punishment for what they called: "A very serious prejudicial action against the interest of motor sport."

But a Ferrari statement Saturday claimed the sport's officials had "a total lack of credibility" and described the fine as "ridiculous and unacceptable."

Ferrari said "the right thing to do" would have been

to pull out of the Grand Prix. "Ferrari will not do this, only out of respect for motor sports enthusiasts around the world," it said.

Describing the episode as "an insignificant incident," Ferrari said the penalty "definitely shows the state of confusion and a total lack of credibility and seriousness in Formula 1, which has been evident since the start of the season."

It lodged a formal appeal against the penalty, and FIA officials said its reaction would be taken into account.

Observers said the team could face further penalties for its open attack on the ruling body.

Mystery illness forces extension of race ban

BRISBANE (R) — Australian officials Sunday extended an order banning race meetings in southern Queensland for a further five days in a bid to prevent the spread of a mystery illness which has killed 13 thoroughbred horses.

The order, originally introduced Friday, was renewed following the failure of federal government scientists to determine the identity of the equine illness.

"Horse racing... has been cancelled until midnight Friday while investigations into the fatal outbreak continue," a spokesman for the government's Department of Primary Industries (DPI) said.

DPI officials also issued an indefinite ban on the movement of all horses, donkeys and mules in the region.

Eleven horses have died over the past week at the Brisbane stables of trainer Vic Rail, who is himself in a critical condition in hospital with a respiratory illness which has yet to be diagnosed.

Two horses at a neighbouring stable have also died. All the animals either suffocated or were destroyed after suffering a rapid increase of fluid in their lungs.

Queensland Racing Minister Bob Gibbs has said there is no evidence to suggest a link between Rail's illness and the death of the horses.

Sweden beat U.S. 3-2 in Davis Cup

GOTEBORG, Sweden (AP) — Magnus Larsson stunned Todd Martin 5-7, 6-2, 6-2, 6-4 Sunday to clinch Sweden's victory over the United States in the Davis Cup finals.

Larsson's win gave the Swedes a 3-2 triumph in the best-of-5 series and a berth against Russia in the finals Dec. 2-4.

Russia upset defending champion Germany in Hamburg to gain the finals for the first time.

Sweden has won the Davis Cup four times, the last one in 1987, and also made four finals.

Larsson, ranked 34th by the ATP tour, made the French Open semifinals this year, but this was easily the biggest win of his career.

"Unbelievable it's my best win ever. I can't describe how I'm feeling right now," Larsson said.

The tall Swede broke the sixth-ranked Martin's serve immediately in the second

and third sets.

"When I broke him early in the third I felt I could win it," he said. "I was concentrated but a little bit nervous in the first set. Then I really played well. I got off to a real good start in both the second and third set."

Larsson broke for a 3-2 lead in the fourth set and he held with relative ease the rest of the way.

It was only the second time Sweden managed to rally after losing both opening singles matches in 61 years in the competition.

Earlier, Pete Sampras retired after the first set against Stefan Edberg because of a strained right hamstring, sending the semifinal into a fifth and decisive match.

Sampras lost the first set 6-3 and then retired after his right knee was examined by Bob Russo, the U.S. team trainer.

"I knew I wasn't going to win," Sampras said.

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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY

BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠A106 ♣J10 ♣QJ872 ♠83
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ Pass 2 ♣ ?
What action do you take?

A.—Despite possession of a six-card suit, the vulnerability is against you and you have the worst distribution possible. Nevertheless, we would still interpose three diamonds. Chances are that, should two hearts get passed around to partner, North won't have enough to set.

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠984 ♣Q72 ♠9 ♠A10532
Partner opens the bidding with one no trump. What action do you take?
A.—Unless you have some agreement for inviting partner to bid game with a club fit, you will just have to bid three no trump yourself. Chances are too good that your hand will produce five or six tricks for partner.

Q.3—East-West, vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠7 ♣963 ♠A10982 ♠A102
Partner opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you respond?
A.—If you play forcing jump raises, a jump to three diamonds describes the hand well and places you perfectly for further investigation. If you play limit raises, you have a problem. We suggest you start with two clubs and follow with a jump in diamonds.

Q.4—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠KJ2 ♣K104 ♠K9 ♠A853
Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one diamond. What action do you take?
A.—If you are going to bid with this hand, and we would, it should be safer to do so now rather than later. Our choice is a takeout double. We doubt if either of us has a card short in at least one of the majors.

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠A852 ♣A94 ♠J53 ♠A77
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♣ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
1 NT ?
What action do you take?
A.—Even if your no-trump range is 16-18, partner's auction shows a maximum of 15 points. Therefore, game would be doubtful, and if partner has any less, unlikely. Don't endanger a sound partnership by venturing into risky territory. Pass.

Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠4 ♣1095 ♠10782 ♠A8765
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
1 ♣ Dbl 2 ♣ ?
What action do you take?
A.—To bid or not to bid—that's the question over East's grotesque heart raise. It looks as if partner has a singleton heart, which means the hands are fitting well, so bid four clubs. That also has lead-directing advantages if either opponent continues on to four hearts.

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4th Briton fails drug test

The early pace was dictated by German Stefan Freigang, Olympic bronze medalist two years ago. But last year's winner Xolile Yawa of South Africa did not take up the challenge and quickly allowed a 35-second gap to open between himself and the leading group.

A headline in Sunday's issue of the Jordan Times erroneously read: "Qatar wins marathon event at the 5th International Arabian Horse Home Show." The headline should have read: "The UAE wins marathon event ..." as was reported in the text. The Jordan Times apologises for any inconvenience caused by the error.

He had already decided to pull out of the English Commonwealth Games team be-

Tooy Ward, spokesman for the British Athletic Federa-

Diane Modahl, the women's 800 metres runner, and sprinter Paul Edwards have protested their innocence and await hearings, while sprinter Solomon Wariso is serving a three-month ban after testing positive for ephedrine.

Sanchez Vicario captures her first Japanese crown



Arantxa Sanchez Vicario

Frazier, wearing the salmon-coloured skirt and white blouse she wore when winning her first title in over two years at Los Angeles last month, found her lucky charm didn't work here.

She mis-hit several easy shots to lose the fourth game and failed to convert a 40-point lead in the sixth before

Breaking serve in the opening game of the second set, Sanchez Vicario then double-faulted to be tied at 1-1, but was never really in danger, letting her error-prone opponent hold only one more game in the remainder of the lopsided 57-

"Every time, I moved the ball really deep, she was in trouble to hit her big shot, but still, I think I played much better," said Sanchez-Vicario, who has won a third of her encounters with Frazier.

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A detailed black and white line drawing of a city skyline. The drawing features a variety of architectural styles, including domes, minarets, and modern skyscrapers. The style is reminiscent of a hand-drawn sketch, with bold lines and cross-hatching for shading. The skyline is set against a background of vertical lines, suggesting a window or a screen. The overall composition is a blend of traditional and modern architecture, creating a unique urban landscape.

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Yeltsin, Major report accord on most issues

BRIZE NORTON BASE, England (Agencies) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin, in route to the U.S. spent the weekend with British Prime Minister John Major in informal talks touching on Bosnia, the Commonwealth of Independent States and Queen Elizabeth II's visit to Moscow next month.

In a joint press conference prior to Mr. Yeltsin's departure for the U.S. here, the two leaders appeared surprised at the scope and frankness of their fourth meeting this year.

"The range of things we talked about could not have been possible a few years ago," said Mr. Major, lauding the "warmth and frankness" and discussions held at his country home, Chequers. In a setting of informal meetings, meals, walks in the English countryside and drinks at a local tavern, Mr. Yeltsin and Mr. Major had what the Russian president termed a "warm, absolutely frank and sincere" exchange of views.

"We discussed at least two and a half dozen subjects and we agreed on more than the majority of them," said Mr. Yeltsin. "We have never had such excellent relations."

He lauded the queen's visit to Russia next month as "absolutely historic and unique."

"It means that Russia has firmly and irrevocably entered onto a democratic way. That is what is so important about the queen's visit."

Mr. Yeltsin said they discussed at length Russia's intervention to quell ethnic disturbances in neighbouring member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

"We have tried to do so

the flames of inter-ethnic conflicts in Moldova, in Ossetia, in the Caucasus," he said. "We are somewhat surprised that there is no participation on the part of Western countries."

Mr. Major said Mr. Yeltsin had "approached those difficulties with a great deal of restraint and a great deal of political courage at home."

Mr. Yeltsin was here with his wife, Naina, and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev. British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd also participated in the weekend.

Neither Mr. Yeltsin nor Mr. Major commented on recent criticism levelled at Russia over a burgeoning traffic in contraband plutonium believed to be originating from nuclear plants of the former Soviet Union.

Mr. Major has been reticent about criticising Russia over the traffic, saying he preferred to deal with the problem through "cooperation, not confrontation."

Mr. Major said he and Mr. Yeltsin had sought to set out a political way forward in the Bosnian problem, which is expected to come to a head next month when the October 15 deadline runs out for the Bosnian Serbs to accept the most recent peace plan.

Britain has tacitly opposed the lifting of a U.N. arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims, a move Russia appears certain to veto if it comes before the U.N. Security Council for a vote.

In Washington, President Clinton and Mr. Yeltsin are expected to expand the U.S.-Russian security relationship at this week's summit. The move will involve an initiative to curb "loose" nuclear materials and a pledge that both countries will play a

role in Europe's future, senior U.S. officials said.

In interviews, the officials said while a major focus of the two-day meeting will be burgeoning economic ties, the two leaders will also deal with critical security issues, past and present, a joint statement is planned.

Mr. Clinton comes to their third summit embattled on issues from Haiti to health care and with polls showing he has weak support from the American public. Meanwhile, Mr. Yeltsin appears politically resurgent and is presiding over a period of unusual stability in Russia, U.S. officials said.

These officials said it is very likely Mr. Yeltsin will run for a second term, despite earlier pledges to the contrary.

Because of Mr. Yeltsin's relatively strong domestic political position and the deepening U.S.-Russian relationship, U.S. officials said Mr. Clinton is expected to press Mr. Yeltsin to act on some problems that have long nagged Washington.

These include Moscow's insistence on arms sales to Iran and its resistance to elements of several arms accords, like those dealing with conventional arms and chemical arms.

"The Russians have to come to terms with getting these off the agenda and finding ways so that every other week we don't have some other piece of the bureaucracy raising a problem that sort of stalls things," one senior official said.

"The idea that we can simply not have movement because they cannot deal with the issue is not acceptable and it's a real political problem for us," he added.

Airmen graduate

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein on Sunday presented wings and certificates to commercial pilots who graduated from the Royal Jordanian Aviation Academy. The King also presented certificates to graduates from the Royal Gliding Club and honoured veteran employees. King Hussein received the academy's trophy from Interior Minister Salameh Hamad, who is the acting minister of transport.

The graduation ceremony was attended by Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmed Al Lawzi, Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Muhammad, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid and Prince Firas Ben Ra'd, King Hussein's advisors Khalid Al Karaki and Izuddin Al Khatib Al Tammari, several ministers and senior government officials and several ambassadors.



Israeli Arab pays tribute to Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — An Israeli Arab member of Knesset (MK) on Sunday described His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan's meeting in London last week with Israeli opposition Likud Party leader Benjamin Netanyahu as an important and positive step in the course of attaining a just peace in the Middle East.

Talal Al Sanaa, who represents the Arab Democratic Party in the Knesset, said his party supported Jordan's drive to ensure a just and comprehensive peace and the withdrawal of all Israeli forces from the occupied Arab lands.

"Our party also supports the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital," Mr. Sanaa told a press conference here.

Paying tribute to His Majesty King Hussein's role in the peace process, Mr. Sanaa said the King's role had given great impetus to the peace process and stimulated progress on all Israeli Arab tracks of negotiations.

"The King's initiatives and

stands have been instrumental in enhancing mutual confidence which is vital for a just and enduring peace," said Mr. Sanaa who was received in audience by the King at the Royal Court last week.

"The King's initiatives have placed the ball in the Israeli court and I will call on the Knesset to respond favourably to the Jordanian moves towards peace," Mr. Sanaa said.

Mr. Sanaa was reportedly waiting in Jordan for Iraq to let him and a delegation of fellow Israelis to visit Baghdad.

"We feel that it is our duty to visit Iraq in a show of solidarity with its people who have been suffering from the consequences of the sanctions," said Mr. Sanaa, adding that the Israeli government opposed the visit.

Mr. Sanaa refused to elaborate on the nature of the contacts with the Iraqis if a visa was issued. But he said he could not rule out the possibility of the peace process being discussed during his stay in Baghdad.

No ceasefire but Kabul frontlines quiet

KABUL (AFP) — Warring Shiite factions in southwest Kabul silenced their guns Sunday, although there was no extension of Saturday's temporary ceasefire, a spokesman for Harakat-e-Islami here said.

A truce announced Saturday for the morning was extended for four hours in the afternoon, "but today there is no ceasefire," said the Harakat spokesman.

Harakat and Shiite rivals Hezb-e-Wahdat have been fighting for 12 days in a bloody battle which has resulted in more than 2,000 wounded and an estimated 600 to 700 killed, according to hospital statistics from southwest Kabul.

All Kabul hospitals are now filled beyond normal capacity, with extra patients occupying floor space, foreign medical aid sources stated.

Iranian Ambassador Gholam Reza Hadodi was not available for comment on the results of his meeting with Wahdat leader Abdul Ali Mazari for which Saturday's ceasefire was especially

arranged. The Iranian news agency IRNA reported, quoting militia sources in Pakistan, that the rival militias fighting in Kabul have agreed to a ceasefire in the west of the city.

"Sources close to Afghan Hezb-e-Wahdat have announced today (Saturday) in Peshawar... that with the mediation of Iran's embassy in Kabul the conflicts in the western part of Kabul were halted and the belligerent parties agreed on a ceasefire to come into effect Saturday 24 September," IRNA said on Saturday night.

The military forces including jets and heavy artillery of Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani have sided with Harakat in this fight while Wahdat is supported by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e-Islami faction, a rival of Mr. Rabbani.

In south Kabul, Hezb-e-Islami fighters have occupied areas behind Darulaman Palace. They are now pressing the nearby former Russian Scud missile base, but have yet failed to capture.

Opposition parties accuse government of curbing media

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Eight political parties on Sunday accused the government of launching an anti-media campaign which applies pressure means reminiscent of those which were used under martial laws that were repealed after the democratisation process began in 1989.

In a letter to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, the eight opposition parties also charged the government of employing legislation to serve its policies at the expense of freedom of the press.

The opposition eight said the alleged campaign was targeting political and newly established newspapers, with many of these papers referred to court under laws other than the Press and Publication Law.

"The parties added that the government was using legislation to curb the freedom of expression and forcing the papers to promote its official policies at a time 'when those who violate the law by contacting the enemy are left unpunished'."

"Any criticism is considered slander against the government and any word is

interpreted as harmful to national unity because this interpretation justifies legal action," the eight parties claimed.

"(We) demand that the practice of detaining journalists and referring newspapers to court are stopped so that they will not lead to the elimination of opposition, something which will deny Jordan a basic pillar of democracy," the parties said in the letter, a copy of which was made available to the Jordan Times.

The opposition groups said that democracy means the emergence of different viewpoints on public issues as well as equal rights for all, "a just application of the law and denunciation of all that is reminiscent of martial practices."

"The parties urged the government to stop all 'practices that infringe on public freedoms and threaten the role of the press,' demanding that official media allow room for opposition viewpoints since these media belong to the people and the government had no right to 'monopolise them.'"

The opposition eight also demanded that the govern-

ment punish citizens who violate the law by establishing contact with Israel and normalise ties with it, especially that a committee for resisting submission and normalisation set up by the eight parties is seen as illegal and its statements are banned from publication.

They said the government's ban on publishing statements made by the committee was politically motivated, arguing that the committee is legal because it is an organ of licensed parties.

"The government's position aims at preventing views opposed to normalisation of ties with Israel from reaching the people," charged the parties, which included the Islamic Action Front, the Arab Ba'ath Party, the Communist Party and other leftists and pan-Arabist parties.

"Unlike the case in earlier statements, the committee against submission and normalisation did not sign the letter. The Press and Publication Department has said it was illegal to publish statements made by the committee because it was not licensed and any publication of its activities would violate the press and publication law."

First Israeli terror suspect pleads innocent at trial

TEL AVIV (AP) — The first of a suspected right-wing Jewish terror group went on trial in military court Sunday and pleaded innocent to charges of smuggling explosives out of an army base and illegally training civilians on how to use them.

Lieutenant Oren Edri, 23, is one of 10 Jewish settlers detained since Sept. 2 on suspicion of organising revenge attacks against Palestinians.

Two were caught amid plans to shoot an Arab youth on a bicycle in the Jerusalem area, and all are being questioned about possible links to the slayings of four Palestinians since December. Newspapers said they also were planning an attack on Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) headquarters in Jerusalem, the Orient House.

A military judge at the court in the ancient port of Jaffa read a four-count charge sheet against Lt. Edri, of the Kiryat Arba settlement near Hebron.

The charges were vague, shedding little light on the extent of the alleged terror cell's activities.

The judge, Colonel Mordechai Peled, accused Lt. Edri of stealing a block of

plastic explosives and court documents suggested that he gave them to another suspect in the terror ring. Peled, the judge, hinted at this, saying that another suspect, Yaacov Ben-David of Jerusalem, would be called as a prosecution witness when the court next convenes on Oct. 11.

Three other charges were read against Lt. Edri — divulging military secrets, conducting unbecoming officer and engaging in military training outside the army.

The weapons charge alone carries a maximum seven-year sentence, and lawyers estimated the combined charges carried a 20-year maximum jail term — although rarely are such stiff punishments meted.

Judge Peled said Lt. Edri had confessed to the charges. Lt. Edri's lawyer, Zion Amir, said his client was innocent. He argued that any confession extracted from his client was "not worth anything," alluding to past complaints of mistreatment while in prison.

Lt. Edri has said he was kept in solitary confinement in a rat-infested cell, a hurlap bag placed over his head and that he was denied access to a lawyer for more than a week.

Turkish army in furious drive

TUNCALI, Turkey (R) — Turkish helicopter gunships pounded rebel Kurds in the rugged Mammur mountains on Sunday, the fourth day of an offensive to flush out some 3,000 separatist guerrillas from the eastern province of Tunceli.

Witnesses said Super Cobra gunship fired rockets, and U.S.-made Sikorsky helicopters ferried in reinforcements, including elite special forces, in a furious drive to knock out units of the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) and capture their regional commander.

The offensive appeared an effort to put teeth into recent claims by Prime Minister Tansu Ciller and other top officials that Ankara had virtually finished off the Kurdish rebels. At least 12,900 people have died in the 10-year-old insurgency.

Despite the army's firepower rebel casualties appeared to be low, however.

Figures from the operation were confused, but military officials and local residents said at least 16 people — 10 rebels, three soldiers and three villagers — had died.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Egypt forces Sudanese plane to land in Cairo

CAIRO (AP) — The civil aviation authority forced a private plane carrying a high-ranking Sudanese official to land Sunday at Cairo airport after it entered Egypt's air space without permission, aviation officials said. The forced landing and payment of a \$200 fine before the craft was allowed to depart follow a series of tit-for-tat measures by Egypt and Sudan as part of a feud over the border enclave of Halaib. Fateh Mohammad Ahmad, state minister for presidential affairs, was returning home from a visit to Turkey when his plane strayed into Egypt's air space, said the officials who insisted on anonymity. One official said forcing down an aircraft was not exceptional, but the action came a week after Egyptian officials complained an Egypt Air flight was held at Khartoum's airport for more than two hours without explanation. An Egyptian ship also was held for 12 days at Sudan's Wadi Halfa port with more than 40 sailors on board for not paying required fees. The ship was allowed to leave Saturday.

Eight reportedly killed in Iran drugs raid

NICOSIA (AP) — Eight drug traffickers were killed this weekend in a shootout with police in Iran's southeastern province of Kerman, according to the Islamic Republic news agency (IRNA). Houssein Mahmoudi of Iran's police anti-drugs squad told IRNA that 250 kilograms (550 pounds) of opium were seized during the operation Saturday in Kerman's mountains. He said police suffered no casualties. IRNA said that according to Mr. Mahmoudi the eight bandits belonged to the gang of "the notorious criminal" Gholam Shahbakhsh. Police confiscated radio communications equipment, rocket propelled grenade launchers, a rifle, ammunition and "a large amount of medicine and clothing."

Israeli team delay departure for Haiti

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Israeli government delayed the planned departure on Sunday of 30 police officers to join a peacekeeping force in Haiti, officials said. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin decided to hold up what would be the first Israeli deployment as part of an international force to allow time to examine the situation on the Caribbean island. The decision was made before U.S. Marines shot dead nine Haitians on Saturday. Police chief Assaf Hefetz had announced Thursday that the policemen would start their three-month mission in Haiti on Oct. 1 after spending several days in Puerto Rico. The 30 were then to be replaced by a second group.

Rations reduced in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AFP) — The Iraqi government has sharply cut individual quotas of essential food products rationed since the United Nations imposed sanctions on Baghdad in 1990, the official press said here Sunday. Ministers decided to make rations cuts, the first since the embargo was imposed, because of "the economic situation created by the unjust embargo and the lower grain harvest in 1994," press reports said. The Iraqi cabinet has decided that from Oct. 1 each ration card-holder will be entitled to six kilograms of flour a month, three kilograms less than previously. Rice rations will be cut by one kilogramme to 1.5 kilograms a month, the sugar quota will be halved to 750 grammes and allocations of cooking oil will fall by 0.1 litres to 0.65 litres. Individual quotas of tea, detergent, soap and powdered baby milk will not be reduced.

Russian ultranationalist leaves Tunisia

TUNIS (AP) — Russian ultranationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy wrapped up a two-week vacation in Tunisia late Saturday, insisting he met with officials but was getting a cold shoulder from the president. The right-wing lawmaker, whose visa requests have been turned down by other countries, stayed in the coastal town of Hamamet and said he had "political and financial" contacts with officials in Tunisia and Libya. Speaking to reporters at the Tunis airport shortly before leaving, Mr. Zhirinovskiy said he met with officials as a private citizen. Government officials, speaking on customary anonymity, said President Zine Al Abidine Ben Ali "did not have the least contact" with the Russian lawmaker. On Wednesday, Norway said it denied Mr. Zhirinovskiy a visa because of "threatening and offensive remarks," he made during previous foreign visits, such as threatening Russia's neighbours and insulting minorities. Several other countries have denied him entry, including Germany, France and Switzerland.

Iran stages 'sacred defence week'

NICOSIA (AP) — More than 20,000 Iranian ground troops Sunday culminated three days of manoeuvres in southeastern Iran as part of "sacred defence week," the Islamic Republic News Agency reported. The manoeuvres, code-named Thamen Al Aeme, or the eighth imam, were held in the city of Khash, about 80 kilometres from the Pakistani border, IRNA said. Covering over 2,000 square kilometres, they were the largest manoeuvres yet by the 88th Armoured Division of Sistan-Baluchestan province, according to the state-run news agency, monitored in Nicosia. Chief of Staff Ali Shahrshah said in a speech at the manoeuvres "close that such exercises are the only way to preserve combat readiness against the threat of an invasion of the country, IRNA said without elaborating.

Qatar, U.S. ease travel requirements

DOHA (AP) — Qatar and the United States signed Sunday an agreement to facilitate travel between the two countries, the state news agency reported. The Qatar News Agency (QNA) said citizens of both countries can now get 10-year multiple entry visas for purposes of tourism, business, research or medical treatment. The agreement, signed by Foreign Under-Secretary Ahmad Ben Abdullah Al Mahmood and U.S. Ambassador Kenton Wesley Keith, is a result of a recent visit to Washington by the Qatari foreign minister, Sheikh Hamad Ben Jaber Al Thani, QNA said.

60 refugees paddle rubber rafts to Sweden

GOTLAND (AFP) — Some 60 refugees, most likely from Iran, arrived on the island of Gotland on Sweden's southeastern coast in rubber dinghies on Sunday, Swedish coast guard officials said. Five dinghies with about 10 refugees per boat arrived on the island shortly before midday. A Latvian fishing boat, from which the refugees are believed to have put in the rafts, remained one nautical mile off the coast of Gotland, with an additional 18 refugees and three crew on board. The trawler was towed into the Herrevik harbour by the coast guard. "In total there were about 60 refugees from the trawler. They probably come from Iran, or at least most of them," said Visby police duty officer Reinert Lindgren. "The refugees seem cheery, hale and hearty, consisting of young and middle-aged people and one child," he added.

COLUMN

Mandela meets Prince Edward

PRETORIA (AFP) — Britain's Prince Edward, third son of Queen Elizabeth II, interviewed President Nelson Mandela Saturday for a television documentary, a Sunday newspaper reported. Prince Edward was on a low-key two-day visit to South Africa to film the interview as part of a television special on the Commonwealth commissioned by an Australian network, the Sunday Times said. The prince, who has his own production company, described Mr. Mandela as "charming and affable man." "But he seems to have a perfectly manic schedule," the prince said. "You really have to look after him better." Mr. Mandela said Prince Edward was a "most pleasant, clear-thinking young man." Prince Edward's brief private visit precedes an official tour in November by the Princess Anne and a state visit by the queen in March next year.

Yeltsin goes to pub during U.K. visit

LONDON (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin stopped by a typical British pub Saturday during a weekend visit for informal talks with Prime Minister John Major. The two leaders and their wives went into the Bernard Arms, an ivy-covered inn, after a walk in the countryside near Chequers, the country house retreat of Britain's premiers. The two couples spent about half an hour drinking beer in the pub before leaving in a motorcade to return to Chequers, television news reports said. Mr. Yeltsin, who appeared to enjoy the experience, waved and gave the thumbs-up sign to the passers-by.

USAIR engine loses power on approach

TALLAHASSEE, Florida (R) — A USAIR jet with 94 people on board lost power in one engine as it approached the Tallahassee Airport Friday, but the plane landed without incident, a spokesman for the airline said Saturday. He said USAIR Flight 1141, en route from Charlotte to Florida's capital, was approaching the airport at 12:30 p.m. EDT (1630 GMT) Friday when its number one engine shut down, but the pilot maintained control of the airplane and there were no other problems. The spokesman said he believed the Fokker F-100 jet's engine was repaired and back to normal by Saturday afternoon.

Millionaire's gift to Vatican — a hotel

PITTSBURGH, United States (AFP) — The U.S. philanthropist John Connolly is to give the Vatican a 132-room hotel to house cardinals when they elect popes, a spokesman for the Roman Catholic diocese here said. Mr. Connolly, whose fortune has been estimated at \$370 million by Forbes Magazine, owns companies that run hotels and floating casinos in the eastern and midwestern United States. The spokesman said Saturday that the hotel, yet to be built, would "be for the cardinals to use when they elect a new pope, and for the prelates and others in the church at other times."

Singapore schools to cane pupils if needed

SINGAPORE (R) — Singapore's Education Ministry has reserved the right to cane schoolchildren when appropriate, although most parents and students are against the punishment, a local newspaper said Sunday. Responding to queries from the Straits Times newspaper on the state of discipline in Singapore's schools, the ministry said: "Schools will also not hesitate to cane pupils where it is appropriate. As good discipline is a necessary prerequisite for teaching and learning to take place, the ministry will continue to enforce discipline in our schools," the ministry said.